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DESCRIPTIONS OF IRELAND, 1550-1650:
SOME PROBLEMS OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL RENAISSANCE

by

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A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled DESCRIPTIONS OF IRELAND, 1550-1650: SOME PROBLEMS OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL RENAISSANCE, submitted by BRIAN SOMERVILLE ROBINSON in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

The thesis examines some descriptions of Ireland written between 1550 and 1650. The emphasis is on the thought implicit in the information which is included in the particular description, rather than on the exactness or the truthfulness of that assessment. Once this methodological position is taken it is apparent that the Elizabethan descriptive work depended on certain mediaeval premises. These include the intention of mediaeval logic to discover the general essence of the particular individual object; in the case of Ireland this involved the "Irelandness" of Ireland. That is, most descriptions begin with an attempt to portray the total nature of Ireland.

Various techniques are apparent. (i) The use of etymology establishes the named and seemingly permanent (in that it is derived from authorities) essence of the particular place, whether it be the whole of Ireland or a specific town. (ii) Similarly, the antiquarian movement, which began at this time with an emphasis on the link with the past provided by ruins, is an example of how personal observation might be controlled by relating the observation to a logical process. That is, just as the mediaeval topographical description acted as a logical means to establish "present" history, so ruins could provide topographical data for the history of the past. (iii) Chorography could not fit into

mediaeval cosmography quite so readily. As an abstraction from the map it involved the isolation of the visual sense, and such isolation necessitated the break down of the total mediaeval form of topographical description. However, as an encyclopaedic form, chorography often necessitated the use of mediaeval sources as a means to establish the ordered completeness of the many otherwise unrelated objects described. (iv) Finally, it is shown that applied knowledge as exemplified in colonial schemes depended, literally, on similar founding premises.

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PREFACE

This thesis has a small focus of interest; its aim is simply to understand how ordinary literate men could describe a particular place at a particular period in time. That is Ireland between 1550 and 1650. These limits are not altogether arbitrary. As Campbell has put it, before 1650 writers expressed themselves "in terms of policy, or in random and usually limited observation".¹ Most of the literature therefore bears a common qualitative stamp. Consequently, such well known authors as Petty and Boate, both members of the more empirical and statistical age of the second half of the seventeenth century, are not included. The sources for a study of the Elizabethan era are by comparison time-bound and limited and in that sense much of the material can have little relevance for the modern geographer. Yet the period is important for its vital, if confused, association of those three factors of present thinking in geography which may be said to constitute the essence of modern geography; these are (i) the emphasis in descriptions on information rather than entertainment, (ii) the use of cartography as an integral part of description, and (iii) the concept of a closed world as it was initiated by the Age of Discoveries.

¹M. Campbell, "People too few or too many" in Conflict in Stuart England, ed. B. D. Henning, London 1960, p. 185.

However, there is a problem in that few of that age were able to isolate these elements as easily as the modern historian. Or, as Lewis Mumford says, "... only a handful of people in any age are its true contemporaries".² It is the point of view of this thesis that the study and the understanding of those who are not an epoch's true contemporaries has been one of the most neglected aspects of the history of geography. When the common man's ideas are considered as "grotesque" (Sauer), or his literature is dismissed as mere "compilations" (Tatham), it is necessary for the historian of geography to come to a closer, almost a contemporary, understanding of the period if only to achieve a more sympathetic picture. But such esoteric knowledge, in which history is the privilege of eye-witnesses, can begin only when the difficulties inherent to that period are appreciated; indeed this appreciation is inchoate for a proper understanding of the geographical literature of the past. In short, the confusion apparent in the geographical thought of the Elizabethan era, in its plethora of naivety and learning, forms the central interest of this dissertation.

It is well to remember that the justification for the thesis of this dissertation rests not in the Elizabethan's direct relevancy to modern times, but in the emphasis on interest - a sympathetic interest - in other ways of thinking. For, in a telling phrase of R. H. Tawney, "sympathy is a form of knowledge".³

²L. Mumford, The Culture of Cities, New York, 1938, p. 74.

³R. H. Tawney, "Social History and Literature", reprinted in The Radical Tradition, Harmondsworth, 1966, p. 199.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

(i) Period and Purpose

The present thesis is an attempt to analyse the nature of a particular period in the history of geography. In doing so a distinction is made between two possible approaches. The first would consider the given period irrespective of whether its geographical literature conforms to present parochial notions concerning the discipline. Alternatively, a second method might analyse the epoch only as it relates to these same notions; that is to say, the history of the period is but a stage towards further known developments and the inevitable present.

The former approach, that maintained by this thesis, is not concerned with the relevancy of the given situation to an "unfolding truth",¹ usually towards some inevitable "truth" as it has been established, perhaps even institutionalised, by the present. Instead the period study, as it may be termed, should be permeated by "a frame of reference which is absolutely a priori to any particular experience with nature and which is a major part of the cultural inheritance of any period".² Brandt has referred to the materials included in such

¹W. J. Brandt, The Shape of Mediaeval History, New Haven, 1966, p. 1. W. Warntz, Geography Now and Then, New York, 1964, pp. 6-7.

²W. J. Brandt, op. cit., p. 1.

a review as "expressions of a system of expectations about natural events."³

It should be apparent that the distinction is not simply one of theoretical importance, for the derived conclusions of each method may differ radically. One need only cite examples dealing with the history of geography. Thus Parks has spoken generally of the mediaeval period as follows:- "In the Middle Ages geography had been kept alive by the sailing charts, or portolani, of the sailor rather than by the exercises of the schools".⁴ That is, only the portolani retained the "true" content of geography; the assumption being that they contained a "true" understanding of place. Parks is implying that the history of geography should be sought in those facets which have stood the test of time, or, to use less figurative language, which accord with present conceptions of "truth" in geography. However, as will be shown in the discussion of Giraldus Cambrensis,⁵ to study a past work in order to discover the present empirical method, "the geography of observation" (this shibboleth has been applied by J. K. Wright⁶), would be to miss its integrating content, the view of the world of a particular epoch.⁷

³loc. cit.

⁴G. B. Parks, Richard Hakluyt and the English Voyages, New York, 1961, p. 16.

⁵See below, pp. 15-16.

⁶J. K. Wright, The Geographical Lore of the Time of the Crusades, New York, 1925, p. 360.

⁷A. N. Whitehead, Science and the Modern World, New York, 1964, p. vii.

Unfortunately Wright followed his own outlook to a logical conclusion.

"Measured by modern standards, this 'geography of observation' is the only kind of geography that rests on a sound and scientific footing ... We gain a deeper and more sympathetic understanding of the working of the human mind when we trace in the geographical lore of the Middle Ages the persistence of old ideas and the transfer of prejudices and beliefs from age to age; but at best this is a disheartening study."⁸

Truth is necessary but apparently only on present terms. Moreover history becomes a series of "oases of fresh observation" (Wright's phrase⁹) between which (one supposes) long strides are the sole consolation.

Butterfield has been a notable and critical opponent of what is implied in "oases of fresh observation".

"The whole fabric of our history of science is lifeless and its whole shape is distorted if we seize now upon this particular man in the fifteenth century who had an idea that strikes us as modern, now upon another man of the sixteenth century who had a hunch or an anticipation of some later theory - all as if one were making a catalogue of inventions or of maritime discoveries ... It is necessary on each occasion to have a picture of the older systems - the type of science that was to be overthrown."¹⁰

For truth depends on presupposition. An explanation may satisfy simply if it fits what is felt to be most true. "One cannot, therefore, define 'explanation' absolutely: one can only say that it is a statement which satisfies the demands of a particular time or place."¹¹ To say so

⁸J. K. Wright, op. cit., pp. 360-361.

⁹ibid., p. 361.

¹⁰H. Butterfield, Origins of Modern Science, London, 1949, p. ix.

¹¹B. Willey, The Seventeenth Century Background, London, 1934, p. 3.

is not to fall into a naive relativism. Instead it is the only means by which it is possible to understand other ways of thinking. "For our purposes at least what subsequent history pronounced to be 'right' is unimportant."¹²

Lukerman reached a similar conclusion in his short study of classical geography. "Meaning and reference must come exclusively from the contemporary source material ..."¹³ This may be regarded as the method of the present thesis.

A most important point arising from Lukerman's and Butterfield's outlook is that "while the historian of science finds change (because that is what he seeks), the student attempting to understand ... a system of expectations is struck by the great continuity of the material".¹⁴ In that sense the findings of the thesis may be anticipated in its method; for in the attempt to understand the nature of these sixteenth and seventeenth century descriptions it became very apparent that they were dependent on mediaeval sources and ideas: this despite the common conception of the Age of Discoveries as a time

¹²C. Hill, Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution, Oxford, 1965, p. 7. It is obvious that the ideas presented here owe much to these interdisciplinary studies by Butterfield, Willey and Hill.

¹³F. Lukerman, "The concept of location in classical geography", A.A.A.G., Vol. 51, 1961, p. 195.

¹⁴W. J. Brandt, op. cit., p. 1.

which broadened the scope of geography.¹⁵ So that while the main explicit purpose of the thesis will be to analyse the intellectual content of certain descriptions of Ireland, there must also be an unavoidable implicit relation between the "period" approach and the conclusions arrived at. The findings may well be contained in the methodology of the thesis. In no way does this invalidate the evidence; it is simply to state that the findings and the method are consistent, and that period and purpose are related.

Another confusing element in the study of the history of geography, which seems to be closely associated with the type of approach which Wright has followed, is that concerning "geographical ideas".¹⁶ A discussion of this concept will serve to further clarify the methodological position taken by the thesis; for it must be made very clear that this present study is an examination of geographical literature, and not a consideration of "man's thought in relation to his environment ...".¹⁷ It is of course recognised that such ideas exist and that they are a proper subject for study. It is doubtful, however, if they will contribute in an understanding of geographical literature. Indeed it

¹⁵In a well known work Woolridge and East have said: "What we have to face and to reckon with is the enormous growth in the scope of the subject, which began with the Great Age of Discovery ..." S. W. Woolridge and W. Gordon East, The Spirit and Purpose of Geography, London, 1951, p. 16.

¹⁶"The history of geography ... is the history of geographical ideas." "A Plea for the History of Geography", revised version reprinted in Human Nature in Geography, Cambridge, Mass., 1966, p. 11.

¹⁷J. K. Wright, "The History of Geography: a point of view", A.A.A.G., Vol. 15, 1925, p. 192.

would seem that those scholars who have advocated such a study have placed greater faith in quasi-intuitive geographical ideas than in what has been actually written. Two notable American geographers have said:- "The sense of place prevailing at any time marks the current limit of range in human occupance and use of the earth."¹⁸ And again:- "No phase of historical geography is more important ... than that of weighing the effectiveness of beliefs as distinct from actual knowledge in the occupancy and settlement of regions."¹⁹ That is to say both of these authors view geographical ideas as geographical phenomena; with Wright this viewpoint may be described as "the geographical study of the history of geography".²⁰ The point of view taken in this present work is that the history of geography is not in need of such an invested geographical content (which may eventually amount to little more than a faithful dogma). The references to geographical ideas in this introduction are included to show that such ideas may be implied in the literature, and are therefore significant in that they may give the individual work a certain coherence; the emphasis is on the implication and the literature, not the ideas, important, indeed vital, as they may be. It is not that such ideas

¹⁸D. S. Whittlesey, "The Horizon of Geography", A.A.A.G., Vol. 35, 1945, p. 34.

¹⁹R. H. Brown, Historical Geography of the United States, New York, 1948, p. iii.

²⁰J. K. Wright, op. cit. (1925), p. 193.

are irrelevant, it is simply that they have, as Hartshorne has said with reference to similar broad studies, "... proven more provocative of discussion than stimulating to further research".²¹ The history of geography need not necessarily involve "a geographical point of view".²²

Nevertheless having established that it is the literature which should act as a central focus of interest in the history of geography it is also clear that the general thought of the period studied will have a considerable influence on that literature, and that this same thought may have been permeated by a knowledge of what Whittlesey has called the widening horizon of geography. Whittlesey has even put forward the theory that

"in proving the earth to be a sphere the voyages of discovery rendered the concept of earth-space finite. The former regional concepts had been tentative, because every world had, as its limits, spaces unexplored but assumed to exist. Those unbounded spaces were now replaced by a sphere of known size."²³

Most geographers would sympathise with such a view, but an unanswered question remains:- is an awareness of the changing horizon of geography documented or reflected in the literature of the time?

In this context Carl Sauer has suggested some general relationships. "During the period of great discoveries a bona fide but uncritical

²¹R. Hartshorne, Perspective on the Nature of Geography, Chicago, 1959, p. 104.

²²J. K. Wright, op. cit., (1925), p. 201.

²³D. S. Whittlesey, op. cit., p. 13.

geography attained its greatest development in the numerous travel relations and especially in the cosmographies of that time."²⁴ Sauer does mention fundamental contemporary problems. "With such a deluge of newly acquired facts about parts of the world, attempts at systematic ordering were numerous, but often grotesque rather than successful."²⁵ Eventually, however, he sums up the period as "... beginning the 'Age of Surveys'" and as "a preliminary synthesis of the facts of geography".²⁶ This is stated as being more applicable to cartography than to geographical description per se.²⁷ The general effect is to dismiss the geographies as objects for study in favour of the more obvious benefits which cartography established for the future. Yet it is still important to ask:- is the mere existence of a body of Renaissance geographical literature evidence enough to establish the effect of the discoveries?

These questions can be answered if the literature is studied within the context of the single "period" approach and without the trammels of "a geographical point of view". For if it is discovered that the "geographical" explanation is unsatisfactory, if there is, for example, a mediaeval element in much of that literature, then it becomes

²⁴C. O. Sauer, "Morphology of Landscape", reprinted in Land and Life, Berkeley, 1963, p. 319.

²⁵loc. cit.

²⁶loc. cit.

²⁷loc. cit.

questionable whether the geographer's normal conceptualisation of the age of discoveries can be held as a valid one. More relevant concepts would have to be substituted. Moreover if Sauer's relationship argument is carried to a logical conclusion it would be as justifiable to surmise that the discoveries might have confused geographical thought. In that case a return to mediaeval concepts, to what had already been established, would be as evident in the literature as the incorporation of new data. (Of course if the historian is exclusively concerned with new data few of these problems could even arise. What is new becomes worthy, and what is older is regarded as being vestigial, an anachronism.)

In truth the actual state of affairs is more complicated than these conjectures might suggest. The return to the middle ages was not just a reaction to the confusion of the times, but in addition it was a reflection of some vital intellectual need. That is to suggest that mediaeval concepts of an ordered world were as vital to the Elizabethan's way of thinking, his "world picture"²⁸ as Tillyard has termed it, as the contemporaneous world. In order to fully understand this need it is necessary to investigate the more general position which mediaeval geographical ideas maintained by their retention within Elizabethan and later geographies. In short it is the thesis of this dissertation that while mediaeval sources might appear to be anachronistic they were in fact incorporated, not because they were authoritative, or

²⁸E. M. W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture, London, 1948.

because the Elizabethans were overtly credulous, but because mediaeval ideas were a logical premise from which ordered empirical observations ("the geography of observation" as Wright would term empiricism) could be derived, and that both mediaeval and Elizabethan geography were consequently part of a deductive system of geographical thinking.

Without wishing to anticipate the study of the individual works it may be useful to state tentatively what is meant by a deductive system.

Briefly, the concept of a scientific revolution is one which hindsight has imposed on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The contemporary terms referred to the Philosophy of Nature rather than to a scientific outlook.²⁹ It was therefore the understanding of nature which led towards a scientific viewpoint. To express this abstractly, the new philosophy was created by "the relation of general principles to irreducible and stubborn facts",³⁰ which, it is believed, would involve Brandt's concept of "expressions of a system of expectations about natural events".³¹ Deduction was concerned with these "general principles" and "expectations" as much as the isolated data of natural events. Accordingly the mediaeval influences on the Elizabethan philosophy of nature were of paramount significance since the mediaeval

²⁹A. Koestler, The Sleepwalkers, New York, 1959, p. 13.

³⁰A. N. Whitehead, op. cit., p. 10.

³¹See above, p. 2.

"expectations" of nature formed an orderly system in a way in which Elizabethan thought could not. For example, there is the well known mediaeval conviction that every fact consisted in some given thing having some quality, viz. the Irelandness of Ireland, the goatness of a goat, etc. ... Needless to say these qualities, or the essences of objects as they may be termed, would somewhat prejudice the possible incorporation of "irreducible and stubborn facts" considered as new data. To add to these difficulties of empirical observation, qualities were linked with logic as a means of giving the individual case, each essence, its place in the universe, i.e. the concept of place and placement is of great importance in mediaeval rationalism. This definition of mediaeval logic may be termed, after Russell, sylogistic inference, and its most patent form is that of the use of authority as a scholastic technique.³² "Aristotle had spoken, and it was the part of humbler men merely to repeat the lesson after him."³³ Although Russell's opinion may be an exaggeration, it is best to bear this relation between logic as sylogistic inference, and the retention of mediaeval ideas together in a deductive system for ordering natural phenomena, in mind throughout the thesis.

³²B. Russell, Our Knowledge of the External World, New York, c.1929, p. 35.

³³loc. cit.

(ii) The Literature and its organisation within the thesis

The literature examined in the thesis would probably mean more to the Elizabethan than to the Modern. Few of the works could be described as classics, and none have pretensions as definitive treatises on geography. Indeed some were not even meant for publication. It is therefore not a disparaging suggestion to say that these descriptions may do little more than reflect their Age, and that it may be worthless to regard their authors as innovators. This suggests that they are period pieces and it is as such that they form the essence of the methodological premises of this dissertation. As Lewis Mumford put it: "The best examples of a culture are not always the most characteristic ones; for what is most typical is what is most time-bound and limited."³⁴ Few can be completely aware of the implications of an age; most live out those implications, or, as in the case of these descriptions, set down their assumptions as the common knowledge. They must have regard for the shibboleths, the conventional wisdom, of their times, forgetting that the very elements which are considered acceptable may be those which should be questioned.

But if the works seem to present a reflection of the common geographical thought of the time, it must be made clear that this characteristic is not the consequence of deliberate selection on the part of the author of this present work. Of those authors specifically interested

³⁴L. Mumford, The City in History: its origins, its transformation and its prospects, New York, 1961, p. 328.

in Ireland at this time, only one is not referred to in the body of the thesis, and that is because the author was concerned with policies rather than description.³⁵ For the same reason Spenser's remarkable analysis of the state of Ireland is mentioned but once (in a footnote).³⁶ On the other hand Stanihurst's description of Ireland³⁷ is so lacking in content (if such a work is conceivable, it reads like a plagiarised review) that analysis would have involved tedious repetition. In short the selective process was limited solely by the number of sources available. The thesis is concerned with more than a cross-section of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century descriptions of Ireland; on the contrary, it deals with them all, i.e. those of a descriptive nature.

But to propose that a work merely reflects its period is in itself a selective judgement. It would be more accurate to suggest that each work is both an individual as well as a contributory effort. Together both aspects have had one notable effect on the organisation of the thesis in that, while the overall aim of the work may be to portray a period in the history of geography, there must also be an analysis of the works as individual pieces (as well as considering them as elements

³⁵T. Blenerhasset, Direction for the Plantation of Ulster, 1610.

³⁶E. Spenser, A View of the Present State of Ireland, 1633.

³⁷R. Stanihurst, A treatise conteining a plaine and perfect Description of Ireland in Raphaell Holinshed's Chronicles, 1586 (London 1808), reissued New York, 1965.

contributing within that period). Such a consideration entails a discursive presentation if only because a discursive argument is the easiest means of presenting each work's individual point of view as it relates to the general thinking of the time. A more practical point is that such a presentation facilitates the discussion of diverse works as they are related to a systematic whole. Consequently in order to do justice to both the individual and the period - the particular and the general - short biographies and printing histories for each author are entered in an appendix.³⁸ Also, in keeping with the nature of a discursive work, the overall picture is maintained in the organization by a non-chronological approach. In an era, such as the Elizabethan one, in which a variety of periods of thinking seem to intertwine, chronology is probably the least effective means of relating the literature together. Instead the thesis presents a logically arranged sequence of ideas as the writers seem to emancipate themselves, deliberately or incidentally, from mediaeval sources and connotations. Thus Cambrensis is presented as a typical mediaeval figure. He acts as a premise for the argument which follows, in precisely the same context as he was retained by the sixteenth and seventeenth century authors. The chapters which follow consider each author individually and how he approached the problem of the description of Ireland, e.g. as he employs, or perhaps argues against, mediaeval ideas. The final two chapters discuss strains of a newer outlook.

³⁸See Appendix A.

CHAPTER II

ORIGINS: THE EXAMPLE OF GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS

From the discussion of deductive thinking already presented,¹ it is clear that no complete dichotomy can be made between descriptions logically based on past authorities and others derived from direct observation. Both are really aspects of a single point of view. However J. K. Wright maintains the distinction as a complete one when he says that the "geography of observation"² was an exception to the general rule in the age of the Crusades.

"The works of our period show all too plainly that they were written in a credulous age, for credulity is an inevitable concomitant of the undue respect for authority ... In contrast with this geography based on authority and tradition stood another great body of geographical lore derived not from books or tradition but from observation by eye-witnesses of the countries of the earth and the physical features of its surface."³

But he also asserts that "no writer was so completely immersed in the learning of the past that he failed altogether to respond to the world

¹ See above, pp. 10-11.

² J. K. Wright, Geographical Lore of the Time of the Crusades, New York, 1925, p. 360.

³ ibid., p. 359.

of his day".⁴ It is this paradox which makes an analysis of the mediaeval origin of the sixteenth century description such a complex task. There is no simple gradation from an early type based on authority to a later form completely concerned with personal observation. Other criteria may distinguish the two, but the shibboleth of mediaeval credulity is retained in such a manner as to make certain sixteenth century descriptions scarcely distinguishable from those of the twelfth century. On this ground alone an analysis of the mediaeval sources is justified.

Giraldus Cambrensis,⁵ the most influential of these sources,⁶ would seem to have taken as much space distinguishing between what could be founded on authority and what personal observation he was entitled to include, as would be expected from a later, almost a modern, authority. After a complete chapter devoted to "the various opinions of Solinus, Orosius, Isidore, and Bede; some true, some erroneous" Cambrensis concludes:- "Nor can it be wondered that these writers occasionally deviated from the truth, when they knew nothing but what they learnt

⁴loc. cit.

⁵Unless otherwise stated all references to Giraldus Cambrensis are from The Topography of Ireland in The Historical Works of Giraldus Cambrensis, ed. T. Wright, London, 1913. See Appendix E for details.

⁶Although strictly mediaeval in organization and thought The Topography of Ireland was probably closer to sixteenth century thinking than most contemporary works. As Kimble has said: "The descriptive - topographical and historical - works of Giraldus are in a class apart ... They owe far more to eye-witness observation than any other work - English or Continental - of the twelfth century." G. H. T. Kimble, Geography in the Middle Ages, London, 1938, p. 79n.

at second-hand and from a distance, in which they placed implicit faith.¹⁰ Cambrensis' faith in personal knowledge is therefore explicit. "Any statement rests on a certain foundation of truth, when the person who makes it has been also an eye-witness of what he affirms."

Nevertheless he was not emancipated from authority; nor did he wish to be. "Still these writers are entitled to their due share of praise for their careful and generally correct investigation of subjects placed by distance so far beyond their observation ... This indulgence we ask for ourselves." Cambrensis was not credulous; he had respect for sources who wrote so well despite "the remoteness of the country of which they treat".

Giraldus Cambrensis' attitude towards the past is vital in comprehending the geographical content of The Topography of Ireland. Specific and general examples illustrate the point.

He devotes a chapter to "the nine principal rivers, and several others which have burst forth of late". He begins:- "The island is intersected by nine noble rivers, which have been celebrated from the earliest ages even from the time of Bartholanus, who first settled in it after the flood." There follows a list of these rivers, after which he continues:- "There are also several other rivers flowing through Ireland, but they are, so to speak, new, and, compared with the others, of recent origin, though not inferior to them, except in respect of their age." He then enumerates some of these "new" rivers. The paradox is obvious. Respect for authority is seen in his willingness to list the ancient rivers. At the same time personal observations

force him to include the "new rivers".

This specific example was but part of Cambrensis' general attitude towards descriptive explanation. In his History of the Conquest of Ireland⁷ he draws a distinction between "Topography" and "History". "The Topography treats of localities and events connected with ancient times, the History deals with the present."⁸ Descriptive regional geography could not deal with what was immediate or even with direct perceptions. The geography of a country was an aspect of its origins and consequently authority (the past) was logically reconciled with common sense observation (the present).

The past is seen as an origin. Amongst the other topics the Topography ... includes "the origin of the various races settled in it from the earliest ages until these our own days"⁹ - origin in the singular, and including "the first inhabitants of this country". This is the Judaeo-Christian concept of a single source as the origin of man applied to the peopling of Ireland. But if people were described in terms of "their arrival and departure"¹⁰ no such concept was applied to nature. Nature, the countryside, surface configuration, "the fishes and birds ... wild-beasts and reptiles" were described as being "distinct

⁷ Giralduſ Cambrenſis, History of the Conquest of Ireland, op. cit. pp. 165-324.

⁸ ibid., p. 165.

⁹ loc. cit.

¹⁰ loc. cit.

from ours in place rather than in origin". Nature was thought of in "static" terms. And nowhere is this better seen than with reference to the nature of Ireland. In this context "place" and "quality" are virtually synonymous. The first part of the Topography ...

"treats of the situation of Ireland; and its locality in reference to the Greater Britain; of the quality of the soil, its inequalities, and its various properties; of the fishes and birds which are distinct from ours in place rather than in origin; of wild beasts and reptiles; the nature as well as defects of the several species; and of the absence of all the venomous creatures."

There is little here that a regional geographer concerned with the "personality" of an area would exclude; indeed both the French school and Cambrensis are concerned with the qualitative "uniqueness"¹¹ of areas. Such a comparison between a modern school of geography and Cambrensis is intended neither to flatter the latter nor to do an injustice to the former. What is being said is that both are concerned with discovering the qualities (properties) of an area, its uniqueness, and the relationships between the factors creating that uniqueness. It is true that Cambrensis would not speak in terms of relationships. He saw, in the light of Aristotelian physics, cause and effect as a single event. That is as a property:-

¹¹As Haggett has said: "... one can do little with the unique except contemplate its uniqueness." P. Haggett, Locational Analysis in Human Geography, London, 1965, p. 3.

"... nature gives things their essence, ergo, etc. The major (premise) is clear, for whatever immediately constitutes a cause, the same also immediately constitutes the effect ... If nature is both the matter of natural things and their form, it also gives them their essence."¹²

The distinction between the two schools is that the French were partly qualitative, and were aided by such quantitative techniques as the map and statistics, whereas Cambrensis' geography remains as being entirely qualitative, without any such aids. Thus, as will be shown in the discussion of Campion,¹³ even "situation" is a qualitative rather than a quantitative term as used by the mediaeval geographer.

On this subject the views of J. K. Wright would seem to be in need of clarification. He seems unaware of the importance of the definition of place in twelfth and thirteenth century thinking.

"It is probably safe to make the categorical statement that the maps and geographical treatises of the century and a half preceding the year 1250 were drawn and written with almost complete disregard of any astronomical consideration whatever."¹⁴

The reason given was that "the purpose of the investigator of the twelfth and early thirteenth century in finding geographical coordinates was astrological".¹⁵ However as has been shown both here and by Tooley,¹⁶

¹²L. Thorndike, "The survival of Mediaeval intellectual interests into early modern times", Speculum, Vol. 2, 1927, p. 157.

¹³See below, p. 33.

¹⁴J. K. Wright, op. cit., p. 246.

¹⁵loc. cit.

¹⁶M. J. Tooley, "Bodin and the Mediaeval theory of climate", Speculum, 28, 1953, pp. 64-83.

the relation between astrology, location, and topographical description is a fundament of the thinking of twelfth century geographical literature. But this does not imply that delineation of coordinates formed a major part of their work. In this respect the influence of meridians and parallels "on the cartography of the age was absolutely nil".¹⁷ What must be made clear is that although the map and precise location analysis may not have been a contributing element, the general nature of location in terms of latitude and longitude (especially the former) is absolutely vital in understanding the character of topographical or regional description during this period. Giraldus' regional description could not have been written without employing an association between place and the nature of Ireland.

The map per se has no influence on Cambrensis whatsoever. Van Paassen has shown that the classical Greek geographers were in one form or another concerned with "the spatial order of the oecumene and the location of its parts".¹⁸ Further he suggests, "through the ages ... we always encounter that which is found in Eratosthenes' specific cartography".¹⁹ That is "a reduction of the geographical problematic to

¹⁷J. K. Wright, op. cit., p. 246.

¹⁸C. Van Paassen, The Classical Tradition of Geography, Groningen, 1957, p. 51.

¹⁹loc. cit.

cartographical terms".²⁰ It was only "the natural scientific view of Eratosthenes" that permitted Strabo "with his 'historical' outlook ... to write a truly 'geographical' work".²¹ This Van Paassen describes as "the beneficial effect of the 'straitjacket' of the geographical tradition".²² But it has been shown that Cambrensis had no such quantitative "straitjacket". (Perhaps "framework" would be a more suitable term.) Nevertheless Van Paassen's description of Strabo's outlook does come close in enabling us to understand how Cambrensis could write a geographical work.

Cambrensis' qualitative association of place, quality, property, and nature can be compared to Van Paassen's description of Strabo's geography as "the totality of the human world, seen in the perspective of the humanities".²³ The relationship with Cambrensis is clear when Van Paassen explicitly states that Strabo's geography entails

"a spatial entity whose content does not consist of nature alone, nor of the local culture as such, but forms the totality of the human world within the given spatial boundaries as also inorganic nature and the world of plants and animals."²⁴

Although Van Paassen does not himself make the point the most significant fact arising from this definition lies as much in the phrase "given spatial boundaries" as in the concept of "totality". So far from

²⁰ibid., p. 52.

²¹loc. cit.

²²loc. cit.

²³ibid., p. 19.

²⁴ibid., p. 18.

Cambrensis being influenced by the locational cartographic framework of geography, he takes it for granted, as "given", because he conceives location as part of the "nature" of Ireland. It was this simple association which permitted him to understand Ireland and to describe it in what can be understood as a geographical manner.

"As Albertus Magnus expressed it, the nature of all generated things depends first on radiation (radius) and second on site (locus continens), for from the one proceeds heat, which is the first principle of life and within the other is contained moisture, which is the first principle of growth. In other words the counterpart of stellar radiation is regional geography, which Vincent of Beauvais analyses as altitude, humidity, the proximity of mountains and the sea, the quality of the soil; for it is all these things that determine the balance between heat and moisture."²⁵

If this association had not existed Cambrensis could not have written what Wright has described as the most important topographical work of the twelfth century.²⁶ Qualitative associations, rather than empirical observation, form the essence of Cambrensis' geography.

The concept of "given spatial boundaries" as opposed to "specific cartography" can be briefly exemplified with respect to the relation between the position of Ireland its "nature".

In his chapter on "The Spanish Sea", really a description of Ireland's relations to its environing seas, Cambrensis sums up both his own outlook on the "nature" of Ireland and the position of Ireland when he says:-

²⁵M. J. Tooley, op. cit., p. 71.

²⁶J. K. Wright, op. cit., p. 119.

"Thus separated from the rest of the known world, and in some sort to be distinguished as another world, not only by its situation, but by the objects out of the ordinary course of nature contained in it, Ireland seems to be nature's especial repository, where she stores up her most remarkable and precious treasures."

On one level this quotation is a statement of qualities and of uniqueness. But there is also an element of the "remarkable" which might superficially seem to fall within the context of empirical observation, i.e. comparison.

"Ireland, indeed, lying at equal distances between the cold of Iceland and the heat of Spain, with its temperature moderated from these opposite quarters, the country is happily favoured both in having a temperate climate and a wholesome air."

The qualities of the Irish climate are not seen as physical absolutes; by comparing the absolutes of Spain and Iceland, the Southern and Northern edges of the known world, Ireland is judged as a happy medium. Here although comparison is the technique the purpose is to establish the unique position of the Irish climate. Indeed the relation between comparison and uniqueness runs through the account as if it were its thesis: for in addition to the qualities already mentioned, Cambrensis includes "a comparison of the East and the West, showing that the West is deservedly to be preferred". Comparison between these two quarters, the absolutes, was a means of establishing the "preferred" uniqueness of Ireland.

"For the further you go towards the East, the brighter and clearer is the face of the sky, the more penetrating and inclement is the atmosphere; but when you turn your steps nearer and nearer to the extremity of the West, you find that, the air being more cloudy and thick, as well as milder and more wholesome, it renders the land more fruitful."

The environmentalist connotations of this section must be inferred. The idea of a "preferred" situation implies an environmental relation with man. Also the comparative method, comparing both north and south, east and west, is part of establishing this preferred environment, since Ireland is considered as a happy medium between the absolutes of north and south, and to be preferred in a comparison of the incompatibles, east and west. But although this is an environmentalist concept, it is not environmentalist in the sense that Jean Bodin's ideas were in the sixteenth century.²⁷ Giraldus simply uses the environmental comparisons to establish both the uniqueness and the preferable position of Ireland. He does not relate that environment directly as an influence on man, i.e. Cambrensis is describing a particular region not writing a general thesis on the relation between climate, topographical configuration and man. Though it is essential to remember that what Cambrensis is doing is applying general concepts to a particular region. General mediaeval doctrines such as Aristotle's physics and Ptolemy's cosmology are combined in specific regional description. It is doubtful if pure observation acted as the integrating element (the "straitjacket") in the description: current ideas laid the foundation for a specific study. Even the comparisons between North and South (latitude) and those between East and West (longitude), were vital to the general thinking of his time.²⁸

²⁷ Jean Bodin, Method for the easy comprehension of history, New York, 1945, and Six Books of the Commonwealth, Oxford, 1955.

²⁸ M. J. Tooley, op. cit., p. 68. It should be remembered that Ireland was at the end of the known world during the period when Cambrensis was writing.

A comparison between the abstract physical views of his contemporaries Albertus Magnus and Vincent of Beauvais, and the regional topography of Giraldus brings out the general context of the latter's ideas.

"Here you may see standing waters on the tops of mountains, for pools and lakes are found on the summits of lofty and steep hills [an account of the highland peat bogs] ... These lakes encompass some slightly elevated spots, most delightfully situated, which, for the sake of security, and because they are inaccessible except by boats, the lords of the soil appropriate as their places of refuge and seats of residence, where they raise their harvest [an account of the artificial islands or crannogs] ... The crops give great promise when in the blade, still more in the straw, but less in the ear ... The crops which the spring brings forth, and the summer nourishes and advances, are harvested with difficulty, on account of the autumnal rains. For this country is exposed more than others to storms of wind and deluges of rain. A wind blowing transversely from the north-west, and more frequent and violent than any other winds, prevails here; the blast either bending or uprooting all the trees standing on high ground in the western districts, which are exposed to its sweep. This arises from the land, surrounded on all sides by a vast sea and open to the winds, not having in those parts any solid shelter and protection, either distant or near. Add to this, that the waters attracted in clouds, and collected together by the high temperature of that region and yet neither exhaled by fiery atmosphere heat, nor congealed by the coldness of the air and converted into snow or hail, at last burst in copious showers of rain. In short, this country, like other mountainous regions, generates and nourishes most abundant rains ... Thus, Ireland, Wales, and Scotland are subject to much rain."

The association of the particular with the general is complete, for this accurate, if not brilliant, description of topographical actualities follows almost precisely the abstract ideas of Vincent of Beauvais and Albertus Magnus as summarised by Tooley.²⁹ That is the understanding of a region is conceived as the integration of "altitude, humidity, the

²⁹M. J. Tooley, op. cit.

proximity of mountains and the sea and the quality of the soil".³⁰

And as Tooley has shown the supposed, astrological, relation between the stars and topographical configuration is where this integration finds its origin.

"What then are the fundamental constituents of place ...? It was established that they are latitude, longitude and configuration. Of these latitude is by far the most important as it defines place in relation to the path of the sun. The property of the sun is to radiate heat and heat is the first principle of life³¹... Great importance was also attached to the prevailing winds, for Ptolemy had said bodies are conditioned by the air which contains them."³²

"All things, from a grain of corn to a commonwealth, are moulded by the place and time of their occurrence, and their life-histories governed by the movement of the heavens."³³

These scholastic ideas integrating the Topography ... become less relevant, though not redundant, in the sixteenth century description. One distinguishing trait was the moral purpose of the mediaeval literature. "The majority of scholars, before and during the early

³⁰ ibid., p. 68.

³¹ loc. cit.

³² ibid., p. 71.

³³ M. J. Tooley, Introduction to J. Bodin, Six Books of the Commonwealth, Oxford, 1955, p. xxxiii. Consequently Wright is in error when he says that discussion of geography's place in the scheme of knowledge is irrelevant. "But on the whole we need not linger over this topic, because the question of exactly where geography belonged in the artificial sic systems devised by the mediaeval mind was largely a matter of academic interest even in the middle ages and was without influence on the actual condition of the geographical lore at that time." J. K. Wright, op. cit., p. 129.

Renaissance, had viewed man above all else as a moral being."³⁴ For example, Giraldus' examination of Ireland's uniqueness and "preferability" was essentially a value judgement rather than an estimation of environment. Not until the sixteenth century would man be "studied in his social, economic, political or ethnological aspects, with these aspects dissociated mentally from value judgements".³⁵

To paraphrase Basil Willey, Giraldus was able to give his black and white value explanation of Ireland's uniqueness, nature, and quality, because scholasticism was a science of Being and Essence; "explanations were all given in terms of the forms, qualities, origins and ends of things".³⁶ Into this non-cartographical framework observation fitted as illustrative, ad hoc, details.

This conclusion, with its apparent emphasis on logic does not preclude the possible effect of authority as a factor in determining the character of topography. On the contrary, all three - logic, authority and topography - are closely associated. What must be made very clear is that authority and "credulity" are not synonymous (as Wright seems to have believed). Authority involved more than the mere quotation of venerable sources; for to the mediaeval mind authority referred to the

³⁴M. T. Hodgen, Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, Philadelphia, 1964, p. 280.

³⁵loc. cit.

³⁶B. Willey, The Seventeenth Century Background, London, 1934, p. 13.

beginning, to the origin, the unique event, which justified the present. This idea is one which the western mind has lost,³⁷ and consequently, as in Wright, it is often associated erroneously with a blind obedience to tradition (credulity) which is the closest approximation to present terminology. What authority really did was to bring the individual author into contact with other past authors who were closer to the original state of affairs. So that a venerated source was (as an elder was in Ancient Rome where the idea of authority was first articulated) literally closer to the past, in this case topography (as Cambrensis defined it: "... Topographie discovereth the things done in times past and long ago."³⁸), than any present and observing author could possibly be. This was why authority had such a profound effect on topography, and why topography was such a vital premise for present history.

³⁷For a review of the concept of authority see H. Arendt, Between Past and Future, New York, 1961, especially pp. 91-141.

³⁸Giraldus Cambrensis, Preface to The Conquest of Ireland, in Raphael Holinshed's Chronicles, 1586 (London 1808), reissued New York, 1965, Vol. VI, p. 111.

CHAPTER III

EDMUND CAMPION: THE RELATION OF HISTORY TO GEOGRAPHY

The main difference between Cambrensis' Topography ... and the work of contemporary geography is not that of a contrast between authority and empirical observation. More important was Cambrensis' view of topography as a pure intellectual discipline. In this respect it should be classified with history.

"The motives, methods and issues involved [were] intellectual and religious, rather than practical ones. ... Wonder, puzzlement, curiosity, imagination - call it what you will: the impulse to pose historical questions has come from within men's minds, and has had little to do with the external demands of life."¹

The problems of both Cambrensis' geography and history were consequently those of inference. In the absence of dated evidence topography was used to sustain a

"logically constructed historical series"² ... The order of conditions in time is achieved not with the aid of dates, but on a priori grounds, or with the aid of logic. That is to say the array of flora, fauna, or cultures are first given a logical present arrangement in space ..."³

¹S. Toulmin and J. Goodfield, The Discovery of Time, New York, 1965 p. 21.

²M. T. Hodgen, Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, Philadelphia, 1964, p. 454.

³ibid., p. 459.

Despite the Discoveries this intellectual tradition was continued in England late in the sixteenth century. Some characteristics of Cambrensis' topography may have been lost. For example his moral purpose was diluted in a mere relation of precepts.⁴ Nevertheless the linking of history and geography as twin intellectual concerns can be seen in the growth of antiquarian studies.⁵ Heylyn's famous association of the two disciplines should not be regarded as an early "wholistic" plea for the amalgamation of two separated subjects ("the long parted sisters"⁶). Their divorce was not so obvious in the sixteenth century.

Campion⁷ wrote his History of Ireland (1569) in this intellectual tradition. A bookish outlook can be seen in his preface "to the loving reader".

"Irish chronicles, although they be reported to be full fraught of lewd examples, idle tales, genealogies ... yet concerning the state of that wilde people ... I am persuaded that with choice and judgement I might have sucked thence some better store of matter ..."

However he did not understand the language and consequently resolved "to give a light to the learned Antiquarians of this country birth, who may hereafter ... supply the want". R. Dudley-Edwards therefore rightly

⁴See Perrott below, p. 66.

⁵A. L. Rowse, The Expansion of Elizabethan England, Vol. II, London, 1955, Ch. 2, passim, and R. G. Collingwood, The Idea of History, Oxford, 1946, p. 58.

⁶Quoted in M. T. Hodgen, op. cit., p. 242.

⁷References to Campion are to The History of Ireland, Oxford, 1963.

regards Campion's history as "one of the first clear links between the new English antiquarianism and Ireland".⁸

By associating history and geography together the antiquarians did little to solve the problem of the relation between observation and authority. On the contrary it resolved itself into an ambivalent situation. In some works this ambivalence approached bewilderment.⁹ However, with Giraldus as "a model and a standard",¹⁰ Campion was able to maintain a certain integration; so much so that Evelyn Waugh described The History of Ireland as "a superb piece of literature, comparable in vigour and rhythm to anything written in his day".¹¹

Like the author of the Topography ... Campion provides a geographical introduction to his history. As in Cambrensis this is really a description of origins - of the most ancient inhabitants, the several inhabitants, the arrival of the Spaniards, the coming of the Picts and of how the Irish settled themselves in Scotland.¹²

⁸ R. Dudley-Edwards, "Ireland, Elizabeth I, and the Counter Reformation" in Elizabethan Government and Society, ed. S. T. Bindoff, J. Hurstfield, C. H. Williams, London, 1961, p. 324.

⁹ E. G. R. Taylor, Tudor Geography, 1485-1583, London, 1930, p. 1.

¹⁰ ibid., p. 2.

¹¹ E. Waugh, Edmund Campion, London, 1935, pp. 37-38.

¹² See Appendix B.

In details Campion's technique is akin to that of Cambrensis; they both make use of associations. In a chapter on the "Nature of the soil and other incidents" Campion associates soil, situation, climate and illness together. "The soil is low and waterish, and includeth diverse little islands environed with bogs and marshes." This leads to an assessment of the inhabitants' "rhumes and flixes". Topics are referred to in the plural and particular areas are not mentioned.

In describing the nature of Ireland he follows Giraldus. He begins with a clear statement. "No venemous creeping beast is brought forth or nourished, or can live here being sent in, and therefore the spider of Ireland is well known not to be venemous." He goes to Bede as a venerated source. "Bede writeth that Serpents conveyed hither did presently die being touched with smell of the land." That is, he is implying that there is something in the quality or nature of Ireland which is contrary to the nature of snakes. Also Campion infers that ancient authority substantiates his opinion. This aspect has been well described by Craig though with some prejudice towards accepting credulity as a critical term. "Consultation of authority and the correct employment of logic, not the examination of phenomena, were the means by which truth would become known."¹³ Notwithstanding Campion observes that

"the further West the less annoyance of pestilent creatures. The want whereof is to Ireland so peculiar that whereas it lay long in question to whether Realme (Britain or Ireland) the Isle of Man should pertain, the said controversy was decided that for as much as venemous beasts were known to breed therein, it could not be counted a natural piece of Ireland."

¹³ H. Craig, The Enchanted Glass, New York, 1936, p. 3.

But he does not ascribe the peculiarity to Ireland's westerly position. Instead he follows the technique noted above - whatever is peculiar to a place is a function of its nature. The property is to be ascribed not to any legend "but to the original blessing of God who gave such nature to the situation and soil from the beginning".

Dudley-Edwards' appraisal of Campion's History of Ireland as an antiquarian work is in need of qualification. The central integrating content of the history is largely mediaeval, and is concerned with establishing the nature of Ireland. And, if the assessment of Cambrensis¹⁴ may be repeated, into this integrating framework opinion and observation fitted as ad hoc detail. Campion was not able to emancipate himself completely from Cambrensis' topography. But it is important to realise the facility with which he applies Cambrensis as a technique, a means for describing Ireland. This would constitute a form of emancipation. Indeed it would seem that Campion felt able to pick his sources where he wished. His own phrase was "choice and judgement". With the God-given nature of Ireland as a premise Campion took whatever technique that came to hand. Consequently as well as the mediaeval and antiquarian influences, it is also possible to perceive chorographical method in the work.

The simplest method of describing these diverse influences would be to follow the order of the work pointing out examples of each as they occur.

The description of the "site" of Ireland is essentially mediaeval.

¹⁴See above, p. 28.

As Campion employs the term, "site" involves - (i) Ireland's general or world position: "Ireland lieth aloof in the West Ocean"; (ii) Ireland's size: "in length well-nigh 300 miles North and South, broad from East to West 120"; and (iii) its shape: "in proportion it resembleth an egge, blunt and plain on the sides, not reaching forth to Sea, in nookes and elbowes of Land, as Brittainē doth". The mediaeval contrast of a Western and Eastern¹⁵ ocean is implicit in the first category; while the use of figures and the inclusion of a discussion of shape qualify the mediaeval totality. Bunge has convincingly argued (in the context of mapping) that when the outline of an object is described "we are dealing with theory, since we have identified the abstraction shape with a particular set of observable facts ...", in Bunge's example, "the outline of Long Island".¹⁶

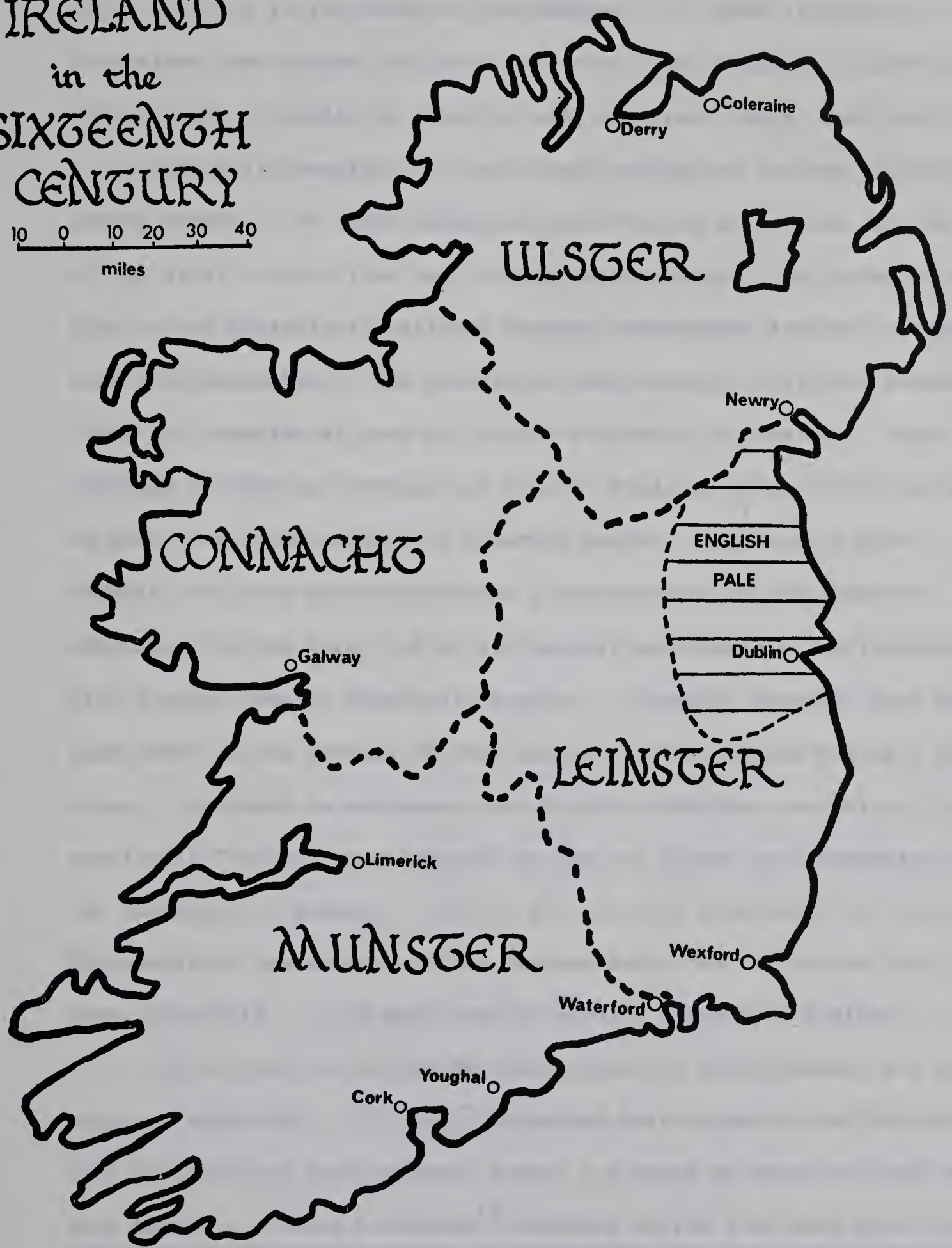
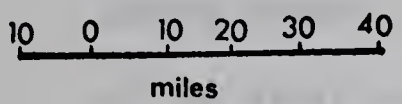
From the general Campion turns to the "speciall parts". Here he employs the chorographical method. The emphasis is on a precise category - the most clearly defined of all "regions" - the political administrative area which in the case of Ireland would refer to the province and the county.

The provinces are his first subdivision. It is interesting that he should describe Meath, usually at that time regarded as a fifth province, as being but a "fift plot defalked from every fourth part,

¹⁵ See above, p. 25.

¹⁶ W. Bunge, Theoretical Geography, Lund, 1962, p. 35.

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MAP I

lying together in the heart of the Realme ...". Each of these provinces he divides into shires and counties. The Irish regions or septes are also listed. Finally he adds the most important towns. (see Map I)

Dublin is described as "the beauty and eye of Ireland, fast by a goodly river". He cites Cambrensis and Ptolemy as sources for the name of the river - Averliffius and Libnius respectively. The relation of the city to its river is significant because chorography did not necessitate such a relationship. The categories were normally rigid and exclusive. There are examples of such an outlook elsewhere in Campion. Thus although he does not mention the type of trade in which Dublin indulged he notes the disadvantages of a barred haven. Dublin is a good example of a city whose status was a function not of any inherent advantages of its site, but of its general position and its relationships with foreign sources especially England. Campion, however, does not seem aware of the paradox of the largest city in Ireland having a barred haven. Although he was aware that Leinster (the most easterly of the provinces) "butteth upon England" he did not relate that proximity to the existence of Dublin. This is all the more remarkable in view of his excellent description of the English Pale, "as the fattest soil, most defensible ... and most open to receive helpe from England".

Yet on other occasions his categories, or subdivisions, are not quite so exclusive. "County Waterford hath Dongarvon and Waterford full of traffique with England, France and Spain by means of their excellent good havens ... Citie Limiricum¹⁷ coasting on the sea, hard upon the

¹⁷ Limerick: Campion sometimes latinised his place names.

river Shannon, whereby are most notably severed Munster and Connaught." Few other towns are described in such detail; for example, Cork is only included as part of a list. Although he had said that Ireland was "divided into four regions" Campion's description of them could hardly be referred to as a regional exposition.

The chapter on the "nature of the soil" has already been described. It remains here to show that it is only after he has established the mediaeval and chorographical nature of Ireland that he begins to insert personal observation, i.e. he begins to criticise authority. Accordingly experience informs him that Cambrensis' view of the extent of the Irish woods is no longer tenable. "Cambrensis in his time complaineth that Ireland had excesse of wood, and very little champaigne ground, but now the English pale is too naked: turf and the sea-coals is their most fuel." At the same time he includes the most notorious of all mediaeval fantasies.

"Cambrensis reporteth of his own knowledge, and I hear it averred by credible persons, that Barnacles, thousands at once, and noted along the shores to hang by the beakes, about the edges of petrified timber, shippes, oares, anchor-holdes, and such like; which in process of taking lively heat of the sun, become water-fowls, and at their time of ripeness either fall into the sun, or fly abroad into the air."

Throughout the work there is this uncritical use of a combination of venerable sources and empirical evidence. "The country is very fruitful both of corn and grass, the grass for default of Husbandry (not for the cause alleged in Polychronicon¹⁸) groweth so ranke in the north parts, that oft times it rotteth their kyne." Antiquarianism would certainly

¹⁸Ranulf Higden, Polychronicon, translated from the Latin by Trevisa, 1387, printed by Caxton, 1482.

not free, Campion from a search for origins. "In the plain of Kildare stood that monstrous heap of stones brought thither by Gyants from Affrique and removed thence to the plaine of Salisbury at the instance of Aurel."¹⁹

As in the case of the mediaeval topography origins contribute towards a static logical event. To his credit however he disavows the possibility of the Irish language having been invented.²⁰ Languages are created by "the course of enterchanging and blending speeches together, not by invention Art, but by use of talke ...". The origins go back to the tower of Babel - "Ireland was inhabited within one yeare after the division of the tongues". From "the Scythians, Grecians, Aegyptians, Spaniards, Danes ... this tongue must needs have borrowed part, but specially retaining the steps of Spanish ...". But the reasons for this mixture coming together in a single place are not analysed. Geographical relationships between Ireland and Europe are overlooked in the plethora of mythologies.

Nevertheless he seems, intuitively, to recognise two main West

¹⁹ Stonehenge fascinated the antiquarians. Samuel Daniel asked in his Musophilus (1599)

"And whereto serve that wondrous trophei now,
That on the goodly plain near Wilton stands?
That huge dumb heap, that cannot tell us how,
Nor what, nor whence it is, nor with whose hands,
Nor for whose glory, it was set to show
How much our pride mocks that of other lands?"

²⁰ M. T. Hodgen, op. cit., Chapter VII, passim.



MAP II - After Evans

European sources. First of all there is what Evans has called the Atlantic route connecting "the coastlands and peninsulas which range from Galicia through Brittany and Highland Britain".²¹ Secondly, Campion points out the reciprocal relationship of Evans' North route between Ireland and Scotland (see Map II). He does so in two chapters devoted to "the coming of the Picts into Ireland" and "How the Irish settled themselves in Scotland". But because of his emphasis on the origins of these peoples Campion is forced to include a narration of fables, which he himself refers to as "idle fantasies". Also it is a characteristic of this pseudo (inferred) history that considerable periods of time are resolved into static events. The peopling of Ireland is seen as a single authoritative event to be compared to the arrival of the English in Ireland. Hence the justification of the inclusion of the geographical section in the History of Ireland. That is to say, the "cultures are first given a logical present arrangement in space ...".²²

The coherence of the work, "with all its imperfections of structure and material",²³ is remarkable. The mediaeval synthesis maintains a pseudo-totality throughout, and the description of "site" creates an impression, not of location pure and simple, but of a certain existence. It is, as it were, the premise of the history. This "site" has a

²¹E. E. Evans, Irish Heritage, Dundalk, 1942, p. 7.

²²M. T. Hodgen, op. cit., p. 459, and see above, p. 30.

²³E. Waugh, op. cit., p. 37.

complete nature ordained by God. Only when this has been established does Campion feel free to describe the "parts", the "incidents", the "defalked" portions, and the rivers which "sever" rather than integrate. Mediaeval ideas give coherence to Campion's chorography in precisely the same way as teleology permitted Ritter to present a "distinct totality"²⁴ in his anthropocentric geography. Indeed spatial association may well have been possible only within the mediaeval context, for chorography, to all intents, avoided the total region, being more explicitly concerned with the world "as it is divided into distinct parts or places".²⁵ What chorography took for granted, Campion established as a premise to be manipulated with "choice and judgement". For Giraldus Cambrensis this premise entailed the logical body of his work. But in Campion the premise, though essential, proved to be little more than a standard which could be attacked from all quarters, though always remaining.

²⁴G. Tatham, "Geography in the Nineteenth Century" in Geography in the Twentieth Century, ed. T. G. Taylor, New York, 1957, p. 46.

²⁵John Bill, An Abridgement of Camden's Brittania, 1626, p. 5. Quoted in F. V. Emery, "Irish Geography in the Seventeenth Century", Irish Geography, Vol. 3, No. 5, 1958, p. 263.

CHAPTER IV

MORYSON: PLACE NAMES AND THE DEFINITION OF PLACE

As was shown in the chapters on Cambrensis and Campion, the understanding of the origins and ends of things formed the basis of a geographical literature which attempted to overcome the problem of defining individual places. This means of isolating locations will be discussed and analysed in detail in the chapter on Gernon¹ in whose work many of the points, which will be merely described here, are made explicitly, and are consequently more apparent. The present chapter will simply introduce etymology as a technique which could isolate the nature of a place in terms of origins and ends, essence and qualities. What follows is therefore a description of one of the more important geographical etymologies to be written in the period under review. It is a considerable example of how all embracing the geographical literature of the period attempted to be.

Fynes Moryson² was a professional itinerant, who spent ten years

¹See below, Chapter V, passim.

²References to Moryson are to An itinerary containing his ten yeeres travell through the twelve dominions of Germany, Bohmerland, Sweitzerland, Netherland, Denmarke, Poland, Italy, Turkey, France, England, Scotland and Ireland, Glasgow, 1907 (first published 1617), Vol. IV, pp. 185-203. See Appendix E for details.

from 1589 to 1600 travelling Europe on leave of absence from Peterhouse, Cambridge.³ This background may have given his work two qualities. First of all, he should have been in an excellent position to make comparative studies.⁴ Occasionally his work does bring out the special characteristics of Ireland in contexts which could only be established on a comparative basis; for example, he points out that the Irish burnt their corn rather than threshed it. More often than not, however, the work degenerates into what may be termed the geography of paradoxes, becoming a relation of rare events and strange customs; for example,

"... in the year 1601, and in the month of November almost ended, at the siege of Kinsale and a few days before the famous battle, in which the rebels were happily overthrown, we did nightly hear and see great thunderings and lightnings, not without some astonishment what they should presage."

This is included in a discussion of "the situation" of Ireland. Apparently the influence of Sir John Mandeville still persisted among English geographers cum travellers cum historians.

Secondly, but in close association with this last point, the description becomes in places a mere chronicle of the difficulties which the English tourist was likely to come up against - the ill-cooked meat, unswept lodgings, dirty beds, and taverns to which the traveller had to beg admittance. As Morley says - "Fynes Moryson was a gentleman who remembered the built pastry and the daintiness of a polite English

³H. Morley, Ireland under Elizabeth and James I, London, 1890, p. 30.

⁴C. L. Falkiner, Illustrations of Irish History and Topography Mainly from the Seventeenth Century, London, 1904, p. 212.

table ...".⁵ His attitude did not remain unappreciated by his contemporaries. Geoffrey Keating an Irish writer, speaking generally of foreign historians, amongst whom he names Moryson, compares their testimonies to the ways of a beetle.

"For it is the fashion of the beetle, when it lifts its head in the summer time, to go about fluttering, and not to stoop towards any delicate flower that may be in the field, or any blossom in the garden, though they be all roses or lilies, but it keeps bustling about until it meets with dung of horse or cow, and proceeds to roll itself therein."⁶

The organization of the description is of interest. It is divided into four parts, three of which are entitled as follows - "The situation", "Fertility and Traffic" and "Diet". Before these there is an untitled general account which might be termed "A General Introduction".

He begins with a statement of the latitude and longitude of Ireland, which he uses to imply not only the position but also the size of the island, saying that both (latitude and longitude) extend four degrees. The origins of the name Ireland are not discussed; instead various well-known ancient authorities are quoted, and a list of names given without further comment - "Plutarch of old called it Ogygia, and after him Isidore named it Scotia." On this point no attempt is made at explaining derivations. Consequently although the mediaeval conceptual association of position and nature can still be found in Moryson's relation of

⁵H. Morley, op. cit., p. 1.

⁶Quoted in C. Maxwell, Irish History from Contemporary Sources, London, 1923, p. 321. Keating wrote in Irish.

position and size there is a certain freedom in the use of these criteria.

(The important etymological "definition" of Ireland by William Camden, should be mentioned here.⁷ Camden's exposition on the origins of the name Ireland is an extraordinary association between the nature of a place, and etymology. Most of the problems which are raised are directly related to those of Giraldus Cambrensis.⁸ There is the same association between place and winds, and a similar concern for the effect of westerly position. It is important to point out that Camden's use of antiquarian techniques and etymology in the same context is an example of how mediaeval topography and antiquarian archaeology could be logically reconciled; indeed with the use of etymology they complemented one another.)

Moryson continues:- "This Ireland according to the inhabitants is divided into two parts, the wild Irish and the English-Irish, living in the English Pale." But this distribution is not maintained in the body of the description. This is significant in that an intrinsic distinction, and one which would be "natural" to Ireland, is deliberately dismissed in favour of an imposed one; his description is based on the

⁷W. Camden, Brittania, ed. R. Gough, Bk. III, 1789. The etymological section is reproduced as Appendix C.

⁸It is significant that, as in the example of Cambrensis, Camden's geography acted as the basis for a historical work. H. Trevor-Roper, "William Camden", The Listener, Vol. LXXVI, No. 1958, 1966, p. 496.

political divisions, Munster, Leinster, Meath, Connaught, and Ulster.

The reasons for this are not apparent in Moryson's work. However an examination of Moryson's main source, Camden, is suggestive. Camden, in a portion devoted to the "Division of Ireland", says:-

"Ireland, agreeable to the manners of its inhabitants, is divided into two parts: those who refuse to be governed by laws and live in an uncivilised state are called the Irishrie and vulgarly Wild Irish: the more civilised who pay a regard to laws and submit to justice are called English-Irish and their country the English Pale, because the first English that came over prescribed themselves certain limits in the eastern and most fruitful part of the island ... But if we attend to the more antient division by situation or rather the number of governors, it contains five parts (being antiently a Pentarch) Munster to the south, Leinster to the east, Connaught to the west, Ulster to the north, and Meath almost in the middle."⁹

It is this "antient division" which acts as the basis for chorography. The use of an ancient division brought Camden closer to the original "situation", or nature of Ireland, than the present distinction based on the Pale. He was not interested in superficial divisions of an area derived merely from "the manners of its inhabitants". He was more concerned with distinctions based on the ancient nature of Ireland. In this sense the political divisions are not "imposed" at all, but are instead closer to the nature of Ireland than the distribution of people.

In keeping with the nature of etymology the purpose of Moryson's itinerary round the kingdoms would seem to be threefold:- (i) to refer to the origins of the people, (ii) to give a list of the inhabiting dignitaries, and (iii) to briefly sum up the qualities, if there be any, of the urban areas. Often all three of these are placed within a single

⁹W. Camden, op. cit., p. 486.

sentence.

"The Ganyari, a Scythian people, coming into Spain, and from thence into Ireland, inhabited the county of Kerry, full of woody mountains, in which the Earls of Desmond had the dignity of palatines, having their house in Trailes [Tralee], a little town now almost uninhabited."

This technique does not necessarily lead towards a simple exploration of where each particular place is. The sentence quoted above, which may logically explain the existence of Tralee, does so without mentioning where it is. Yet the existence of Tralee is used as a premise for an itinerary; for "not far thence lies St Mary Wic [Smerwick] ..." Moryson gives neither distance nor direction. Such a logically oriented system, which deals with properties (origins and ends), would not necessarily have to relate each town to another, since that relationship would not be regarded as having any relevance towards explaining the existence of each town. Each town has a separate origin and a separate existence, and etymology explains both.¹⁰ It is apparent that this inferential technique may encompass what to present eyes would be regarded as several distinct disciplines. Thus the general vagueness of Moryson's geographical continuum between the etymologically defined areas is sharpened only by references to recent events such as the invasions by the Spanish, or the creation of an Earl.

Function also suffers, since towns need not be related through comparison with other towns. They are instead classified into certain categories, the most precise of which is the division between those towns

¹⁰For an extension of this argument see Gernon below, p. 63.

which are by the sea and those which are inland. He uses such descriptive phrases as - poor city (Cashel, which he places in Limerick rather than Tipperary), safe-haven (Beer-haven, Baltimore, Carrickfergus), fair and well-inhabited (Drogheda) and frequently inhabited (Galway). He distinguishes between cities and towns. His cities are in the order in which he mentions them - Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Wexford, Dublin and Galway. No explicit effort is made towards grading these towns: indeed Moryson almost assumes prior knowledge on the part of the reader, e.g. Waterford is mentioned as being "esteemed the second to Dublin", before Dublin is even described. Wexford is described as being "not great", Galway as "lying upon the sea", Cork as "consisting almost all one long street", and Limerick as "the seat of a bishop". The closest approximation towards grading is when he states the most important town in a particular area, e.g. Kilkenny "the chief of the towns within land" and Armagh - "the metropolitan city of the whole island". By his own admission Armagh was in fact in ruins. However the word metropolitan is here used in its restricted and original ecclesiastical sense of denoting an archbishop's see which controls the surrounding bishops of a province. Etymological definition concerned Moryson more than actual description.

Such definition would only be relevant where there was some precise object to be defined. Towns suited this purpose well since they were both named, and hence must have definite origins, and could be shown to occupy a defined position in space. The rural landscape could not be accounted for with such precision. Consequently, no mention is made of mountains or rivers except the most obvious (the Shannon and the Bann),

and landscape features are introduced only where they present themselves as obstacles to travel. In the case of Dublin "the haven is barred and made less commodious by those hills of sand". At the same time the emphasis on categories regardless of function often means that landscape features need not be concerned with the towns. For example Limerick is discussed in the section under Munster, while the Shannon is described under that of Connaught, but the two are not related; even the direction in which the Shannon flows is omitted; the Shannon is therefore a category whose existence bears little relation to its environs. "Shannon is a great river in a long course, making many and great lakes (as the large lake or Lough Regith), and yields plentiful fishing, as do the frequent rivers and all the seas of Ireland." The particular and the general are here given equal weight.

The means by which the particular and the general are brought together is by an associative method akin to mediaeval conceptualism. The closest which Moryson comes to actual description is by means of this association; for example, "Ulster, the fifth part of Ireland, is a large province [no area stated], woody, fenny, in some parts fertile, in other parts barren, but in all parts green and pleasant to behold, and exceedingly stored with cattle."

It is therefore not surprising that it is in the section entitled "The Situation" that Moryson makes the fullest use of both mediaeval sources and associations; accordingly what Moryson seems to mean by "situation" is the natural conditions in Ireland. He says - "The land of Ireland is uneven, mountainous, soft, watery, woody, and open to winds

and floods of rain and so fenny as it hath bogs on the very tops of the mountains, not bearing man or beast, but dangerous to pass, and such bogs are frequent over all Ireland." This is, in general, mediaeval, and is, in particular, almost pure Giraldus Cambrensis. It is unimportant whether Moryson sought such a source, the point is that he follows Giraldus' method. In fact Moryson may have taken it from Camden,¹¹ who quotes Cambrensis specifically. "The country (according to Giraldus) is uneven, mountainous, soft, watery, woody, exposed to winds, and so boggy that you may see the water stagnating on the mountains."¹² It is almost predictable that Moryson should turn from Ireland's dampness to its climate, that is, the two are associated. He says that mariners find difficulty "around the water" because of the many tides, storms, and mists. This leads to an association between climate and crops. "The air is unapt to ripen seeds as Mela witnesseth."¹³ Cattle and corn are both possible.¹⁴ He "observes" that the winters are milder in England but because of the general wetness Irish harvests are much later. Two points should be made

¹¹Moryson acknowledges Camden as a source. "In the Geographical description I will follow Camden as formerly."

¹²W. Camden, op. cit., p. 464.

¹³Emphasis added.

¹⁴Once again a quotation from Camden's *Brittania* is instructive. "The air (according to Mela) is unfit for bringing corn to maturity: but so productive of vegetables, not only rank but even sweet, that if the cattle feed but a small part of the day they will fill themselves ... hence it is that they have such an infinite quantity of cattle, it being their principal wealth." W. Camden, op. cit., p. 464.

here. First, that "observation" and use of authority seem to be reconciled quite easily in Moryson's thinking (as they were in Cambrensis'). And second, that observation leads to the use of direct comparisons. "Also I observed that the best sorts of flowers and fruits are much rarer in Ireland than in England, which notwithstanding is more attributed to the inhabitants than to the air."

This is a remarkable sentence but it is instructive that Moryson does not consider what the Irish produce as being directly related to environment. The Irish climate may produce plenty of corn but it does not directly affect the Irish people. Moryson reserves a discussion of what they grow to a separate section entitled "Fertility and traffic". The distinction between climate and man is therefore both informally and formally acknowledged by Moryson. This distinction is perhaps best described as being one between the possibilities of Ireland and the impossibility of the Irish. In "The Situation" the author describes what natural conditions man had to encounter (that is, how conditions are situated or disposed in Ireland), whereas in "Fertility and traffic" he relates how man has taken advantage of these conditions.

He observes that much grassland perished without use, or was left to rot, or to be burnt next spring in case it should hinder the coming of new grass. This is an implied reference to the lack of haymaking in Ireland. It was not until the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century that haymaking became the practice of the Irish peasant. He becomes more explicit when he explains the smallness of the Irish cattle.

"... they eat only by day and then are brought at evening within the bawns [walled enclosures] of castles, where they stand or lie all night in a dirty yard without so much as a lock of hay, whereof they [the Irish] make little for sluggishness, and their little they altogether keep for their horses."

The best example of Moryson's distinction between natural conditions and the use made of them is his account of the Irish fisheries. He begins with a reminder of the possibilities of the natural conditions (as he appraises them).

"Ireland hath in all parts pleasant rivers, safe and long havens, and no less frequent lakes of great circuit, yielding great plenty of fish; and the sea on all sides yields like plenty of fish, ... so as the Irish might in all parts have abundance of excellent fish, if the fishermen were not so possessed with the natural fault of slothfulness, as no hope of gain ... can in many places make them come out of their houses and put to sea."

To confirm his argument he adds - "Hence it is that in many places they use Scots for fishermen".

Turf burning was not so prevalent as at present. "The Irish having in most parts great woods ... do use the same for fire, but in other parts they burn turf and sea-coals brought out of England." He observes the large scale export of wood (pipe-staves) to make barrels which had such a disastrous effect on the Irish woods.

It should be pointed out here, to place Moryson's prejudice against Irish "slothfulness" in its proper light, that although he will point out that they could do more fishing he does not see a remedy when he remarks - "They are not permitted to build great ships of war", or when he notices that "They abound in flocks of sheep" but "merchants may not export it", or when he perceives that the Irish may not transport corn without a licence. Moryson's assessment of "possibilities" is

really the prejudice of a well-to-do English traveller in a conquered and colonised land. This is not to deny the truth of his observations, but is merely intended to place the present author's own reference to "possibilities" in perspective. It would be completely mistaken to translate a twentieth century concept (possibilism) into sixteenth or seventeenth century conditions.

The remainder of the work, under the title of "The Diet", is essentially an examination of domestic Irish eating habits. In this respect Moryson's description reflects the prevalent attitude towards the native Irish as a nomadic people. They seldom seemed to kill meat. Instead they ate dead animals, either cattle or horses. "They will not kill a cow, except it be old and yield no milk ... They devour great morsels of beef unsalted." They drank the blood of their horses. Moryson quotes their Scythian origins to account for such barbarisms. Lastly, the Irish "like the nomads removing their dwelling, according to the commodity of pastures for their cows, sleep under the canopy of heaven, or in a poor house of clay, or in a cabin made of the boughs of trees, and covered with turf."

What has been presented here is but an excerpt from a work so voluminous that few could afford it.¹⁵ The description is the most "geographical" of the sections on Ireland. But it is of interest

¹⁵L. B. Wright, Middle Class Culture in Elizabethan England, Chapel Hill, 1935, p. 547.

that elsewhere¹⁶ in his monumental tome Moryson includes a description of Irish buildings. Moryson has therefore divorced description of buildings from his general geography: this fact may account for the meagre discussion of Irish cities. There can be little doubt, however, that Moryson's concern is for buildings in particular, and not the morphology or commerce of cities in general.

"The houses of the Irish cities, as Cork, Galway, and Limerick (the fairest of them for building) are of unwrought free stone, or flint, or unpolished stones, built some two stories high, and covered with tile. The houses of Dublin and Waterford, are for the most part of timber, clay and plaster ... In general, the houses very seldom keep out rain, the timber being not well seasoned, and the walls being generally combined with clay only, not with mortar of lime tempered ... For other Irish dwellings, it may be said of them, as Caesar said of the old Britons' houses: they call it a town when they have compassed a skirt of wood with trees cut down, whither they may retire themselves and their cattle."

Moryson has here implicitly distinguished between, what Gernon termed, English-form and Irish-form:- the former being timbered cage work (Dublin and Waterford the two most easterly of the main Irish ports) and the Irish style of stone (Cork, Galway, and Limerick, those farthest from English influence). Gernon was, however, to take this general description of building materials and styles a stage further.¹⁷

There is one point on which Moryson and Gernon do not directly corroborate each other. Moryson says - "The Irish have some quarries of marble, but only some few lords and gentlemen bestow the cost to polish it."

¹⁶Bk. III, pt. ii, p. 74 of the original edition. Vol. III, pp. 498-99 of the 1907 edition.

¹⁷See below, pp. 60-64.

Gernon however writes as if every Irish town was composed of some type of marble. In support of the latter it should be said that the term "marble" is applied locally in Ireland to a variety of rocks. Limestone from Co. Armagh is to this day known as "Armagh Marble".

CHAPTER V

GERNON: THE TOWN AND THE DEFINITION OF PLACE

Campion and Moryson employed logic in order to define Ireland and its unique nature; only then did they move to fragmented chorography. Gernon however specifically rejects chorography.¹ "Do you look that I should describe the clymate, the degrees, the situation, the longitude, the latitude, the temperature, etc. Go look in your mapps. I must have a more quaynt and genuine devise." That "devise" is the conceit of comparing Ireland to the human body. He establishes the longest river in Ireland, the Shannon, as the master vein "which passeth quite through her, from head to foot". The rivers Barrow, Nore and Suir become "three other veins". "Her bones are of polished marble, the grey marble, the blacke, the redd and the speckled ..." Breasts are hills (probably drumlins) "of milk-yeelding grasse, and that so fertile, that they contend with the valleys". The method is cumbersome especially when he attempts to describe the destruction of the woods by the iron industry. And it becomes almost impossible when he turns to the climate. Here he is forced into directly comparing the less extreme nature of the

¹All references to Luke Gernon are to his work A Discourse of Ireland, 1620, reprinted in Illustrations of Irish History and Topography mainly of the Seventeenth Century, ed. C. L. Falkiner, London, 1904, pp. 345-362.

Irish frosts with those of England. It is not surprising therefore that the microcosm-macrocosm analogy should dissolve completely when Gernon attempts to incorporate the town within his study. The description of many sites (towns) could not be contained by a technique designed to accommodate a single site (the ordered uniqueness of Ireland). This same effect was hinted at in the description of Fynes Moryson's use of etymology as a means of defining the town.² Each of Moryson's and Gernon's towns have separate origins and separate existences. Etymological definition suited Moryson's purpose well since towns were both named, and hence must have definite origins, and could be shown to occupy a defined position in space. It is therefore the purpose of the present chapter to show that the attempted incorporation of the town, at the apparent expense of the mediaeval microcosm-macrocosm technique, need not necessarily be regarded as a case of empirical observation. These towns are not observed realities. As in mediaeval conceptualism they have known origins and ends, and need not consequently appear to have any function. They do not do anything, they simply are.

Nevertheless it is clear that since microcosm-macrocosm was an analogical technique, it could not account for the details, the particularities, even if the author wished it. Mediaeval connotations, or a world-picture, might govern qualitative description, and so long as it was restricted to its own terms it remained an excellent topographical method. Unfortunately as has been shown Gernon had to include new material, and the additional

²See above, p. 46.

reality of the town broke down allegory. It gave easily. In the words of Sir Thomas Browne, a contemporary: "The world that I regard is my self; it is the Microcosm of my own frame that I cast mine eye on; for the other [The Macrocosm], I use it but like my globe, and turn it round sometimes for my creation."³

As soon as observation became the focus of attention it would be expected that a priori techniques should break down. In this respect observation might bring less control. "Such a review often brought little enlightenment ... for the sudden supersession of the stereotyped pre-Columban system of cosmography ... brought bewilderment as well as revelation."⁴ Consequently, "in England ... mediaeval conceptions remained but little disturbed."⁵ The first of the antiquarians, Leland, moved from a world of books to personal observation. Eventually his "Laborious Journey and searche for Englandes Antiquities" drove him insane.⁶ The effort involved in accommodating a new outlook should not be underestimated.

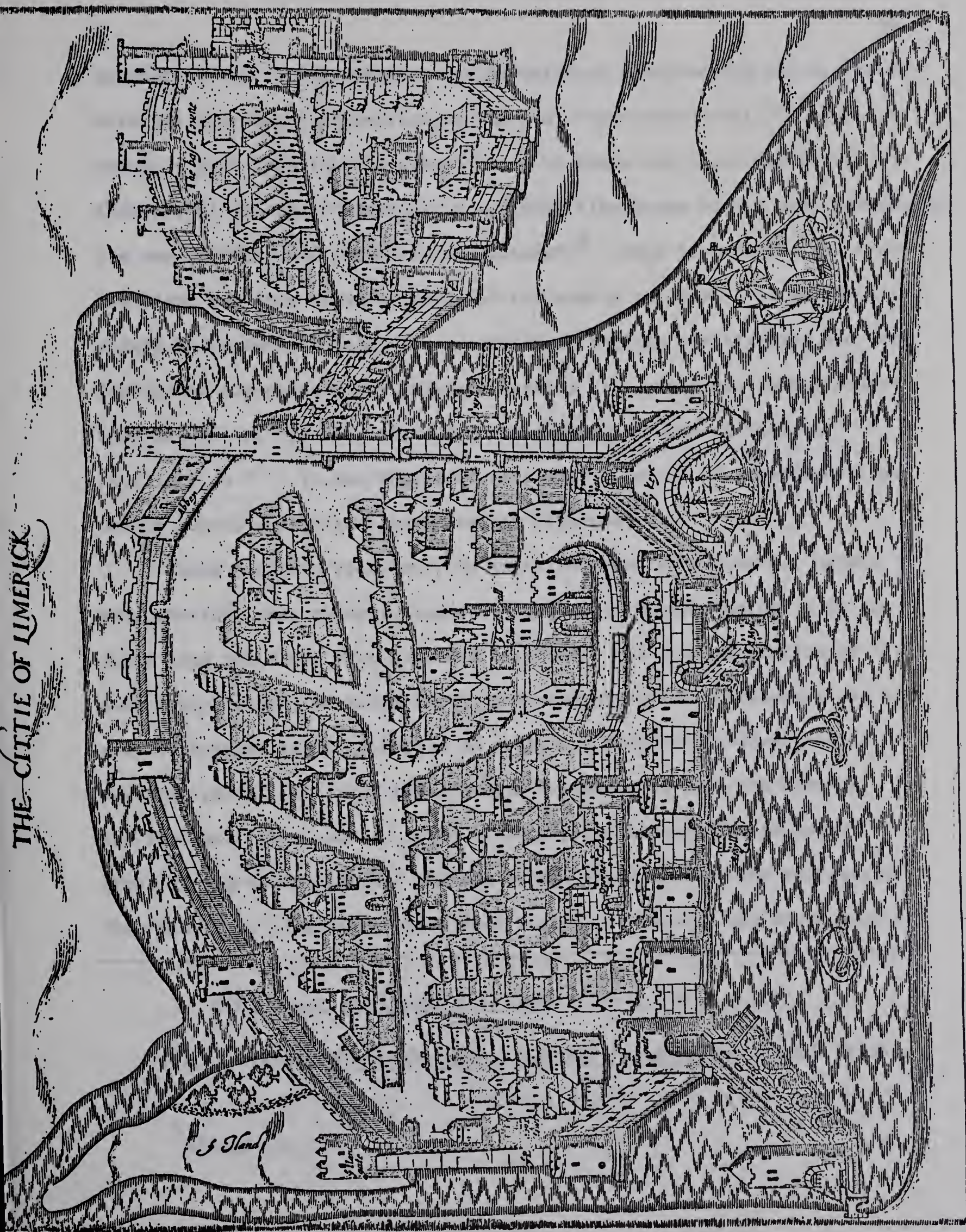
For Gernon the town, and specifically the form of the town, certainly seemed to become the centre of a new reality. Indeed to

³Cited by B. Willey, The Seventeenth Century Background, London, 1953, p. 46.

⁴E. G. R. Taylor, Tudor Geography 1485-1583, London, 1930, p. 1.

⁵loc. cit.

⁶J. Leland, The Itinerary of John Leland in or about the years 1535-1543, London, 1964, Vol. I, Foreword (not numbered).



MAP III - After Moryson (1617)

account for the change reasons can be inferred which accord fairly closely with the Florentine definition of the real, "that which could be proved to occupy a given position in space".⁷ A. L. Rowse has described Galway at this period as being "practically a little city-state of its own, conducting its own maritime and commercial relations".⁸ This is inferred not from hindsight but from an examination of the town's records. In addition it should be remembered that "the recession of English civilization had left Ireland an almost completely Celtic country ... Only the towns, and of them mainly the old seaport towns remained as outposts of English civilization."⁹ It was therefore more than a matter of expediency that Gernon should choose to equate reality with the town.

These implicit ideas must be inferred from the discourse, mainly from the fact that allegory seemed to give way to observation. On the other hand there are more explicit portions. In the description of each town "forme", or morphology, is an example of the deliberate use of precise spatial terms to define an area. "Lymericke divides itself into two partes, the high towne, which is compassed with the Shannon, and the base towne, and in forme it doth perforth resemble an hower glass, being bound together by that bridge which divides the two partes." (See Map III) The relation between spatial definition and the nature

⁷K. McK. Clark, Landscape into Art, Boston, 1961, p. 20.

⁸A. L. Rowse, The Expansion of Elizabethan England, London, 1955, p. 92.

⁹loc. cit.

of the Irish town becomes even more explicit. "A philosopher that saw a little towne with a wyde open gate gave warning to the citizens to shutt up theyr gate, least the towne should runne out." A town is defined by its enclosing wall. In Ireland the towns were such vulnerable exceptions that they had to be protected from themselves. That is, the position of the town had to be defined by a wall. Accordingly, "the founders of this citty ... fensed the base towne ... with a huge strong wall." However, Gernon adds,

"notwithstanding theyr providence I am of opinion that that part [the base towne] hath crept over the bridge into the high towne, for there is nothing remayning in that part, but a street of decayed houses, with orchards and gardens, saving a church and a storehouse, monuments of former habitacon."

The town is not defined by its relation to surrounding areas, but exists because a certain area had been defined as a town. It is now easy to understand why description of towns should break up a technique designed to accommodate generalities or the description of total areas.

The importance of the use of form as a defining technique cannot be overemphasized. Gernon's description of Youghal is a remarkable example. He gives it the term "lurcher". Situated between Waterford and Cork it manages to steal traffic from them both, "especially for transporting of cattle". Superficially this might seem to be a description of both Youghal's general situation and function; and on one level it is. However the word "lurcher" has a more precise meaning than simply to swing from one function to another. It can also mean "a cross-bred dog between collie and greyhound used especially by poachers".¹⁰

¹⁰Oxford English Dictionary.

In this sense Gernon is implying that Youghal is poaching on the privileges of Cork and Waterford rather than competing for trade. Both may be concerned, nevertheless it is apparent that the existence of the Irish ports need not automatically be seen to be the effect of their respective positions. The wealth of a port was the function of its granted privileges, not of its hinterland. A town was defined by its privileges, rather than by its function.

The step from an account of the privileges to the form which those privileges took was an easy, and an understandable one. Gernon therefore usually describes the pageantry (the form) associated with the local government. This description is irrelevant in the present work, but the actual association between forms is not. In its essence the association was almost an organismic relation between the town and its rulers, and as such it was a means towards defining the unity of the town.

Buildings were not left out in the examination of form. Two of his associations are quite astute. In the case of Dublin he notices a resemblance to Bristol, "for the buildings are of timber and of the English forme". This is a reminder of how in Henry II's reign the city of Bristol had undertaken to repopulate the desolated city.¹¹ Cork "stands in a very bogge and is unhealthy. The building is of stone and built after the Irish forme ..." This remark is particularly relevant for Cork was one of the few Irish ports developed without the

¹¹T. W. Moody, The Londonderry Plantation, Belfast, 1939, Chapter I, passim.

influence of foreigners.

Even the countryside takes on a formalistic aspect in Gernon's eyes. Once again place forms the centre of his interest. "The villages are distant from each other about two miles ... in every village is a castle, and a church."¹² "The baser cottages are built of underwood called wattle, and covered some with thatch and some with green sedge of a round forme and without chimneys, and to my imaginacion resemble so many hives of bees about a country farme." His description of the harvest is also morphological in character. "In the end of harvest the villages seem as big agayne as in the spring, theyre corne being brought into theyr haggards, and layed up in round cockes, in forme of theyr houses." (These beautiful matter of fact descriptions are important for their association of factual observation and sensibility. This sensibility was soon to disappear in an age when fact became the atom of experience, an isolated datum, rather than "part of a continuum of deed and gesture".¹³)

For present purposes however an analysis of the description shows a fundamental distinction in Gernon's thinking between places and people. After the abortive mediaeval section the discourse is really two essays joined together. One of these could be entitled "The Irish cities, towns, and villages", and the other "The Irish people". But as has been implied the division is not simply a matter of the organization of the work.

¹² An undoubted exaggeration:- the Irish village or "clachan" was notable for the absence of either church or castle, though the area around Limerick, where Gernon lived, had more villages of the English type.

¹³ H. Kenner, Flaubert, Joyce and Beckett, Boston, 1962, p. 25.

Instead it is a symptom of Gernon's attitude and his concept of what constituted a reality. For him people, their commerce and their everyday life, had little to do with the cities and villages in which they lived. In the description of a single city the division is still apparent. Here he associates town morphology and a superficial account of the pageantry and form of local government. To those separated aspects which have already been examined in Gernon, the separation of form from function, and town from hinterland, there is in addition the division between places and people.

There is, however, a great danger in assuming that personal observation, per se, would constitute an emancipation from mediaeval essentialism. To do so would be to assert that observation formed the essence of the scientific revolution, and would be to fall into the very errors which have been pointed out at the beginning of the thesis. For there have always been men capable of personal observation:- "All the world over and at all times there have been practical men, absorbed in 'irreducible and stubborn facts.'"¹⁴ Although such observation based on close personal knowledge would tend to breakdown a system based on analogy (microcosm-macrocosm), this is only one solution, for it is just as likely that Gernon should replace mediaeval ideas with other mediaeval ideas. Consequently in keeping with the mediaeval philosophy of concept, any change in form would immediately be accommodated by a change in the name of

¹⁴A. N. Whitehead, Science and the Modern World, New York, 1964, p. 10.

that form. That is, observation might present the everyday world "in such a light as to verify ... conceptualism".¹⁵ Also, in keeping with the principles of scholastic philosophy, "in changing form, the same matter changes being (in other words, one moves from one cast to another as the result of naming)".¹⁶

Jean-Paul Sartre,¹⁷ in a brilliant insight, has given a clue as to the nature of the world (Ireland) that Gernon created when analogy gave way. Sartre is here referring to the "naive poetry of the early astrolabes and maps of the world".¹⁸ He says:- "Against a background of oceans, mountains or fields of stars appear animals and persons - the Scorpion, the Ram, Gemini - all of the same size, all equally alone."¹⁹ What Gernon has accomplished has been to replace the cartographical bestiary with the Irish town. This abstracted, but named organism, the town, stands out from the undefinable rural Celtic world. Gernon's Ireland lacked contingency; that is why places and peoples are separated. There is no perspective to relate the town to its surrounding areas. Once the town had been named and its status defined it was impossible to

¹⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, Introduction to J. Genet, Our Lady of the Flowers, New York, 1965, p. 43.

¹⁶ loc. cit.

¹⁷ ibid., p. 55.

¹⁸ loc. cit.

¹⁹ loc. cit.

enter into a world of "considerable circumstance".²⁰ To do so would be to jeopardise, literally, the being of the town. Gernon's concentration on, and understanding of, the form of the town is really an understanding of being, as in mediaeval conceptualism. It is true that perspective, the relating of objects to objects, is not entirely absent from Gernon's Ireland. His description of each town as it is considered in isolation is perspective description - within each town the buildings are related to one another - hence the author's understanding of morphology. But as for perspective relating the towns to either their hinterlands or to each other, Gernon had no technique, otherwise his mediaeval conception of Ireland as a unity would not have been destroyed. Gernon's towns are "all of the same size, all equally alone".

²⁰J. Perrott, The Chronicle of Ireland, 1584-1608, Dublin, 1933, p. 10. See below, p. 66.

CHAPTER VI

PERROTT: DISPOSITIONS AND THE NATURE OF PLACE

The inclusion of geography in the mediaeval history was a logical, a priori, process. The links between the topography and the history were not, as has been suggested, those of an environmentalist or relationship order. "The mediaeval mentality avoided this trap by using the happy device of insulating its ideas one from another."¹ It is only in this sense that the works of Cambrensis, Campion, and Moryson were non-analytical. Origins accounted for the present, not for any other era, and the existing nature of things was described in terms of what Hodgen has called the "logical present".² But whatever the failings of this abstract scholasticism it seemed to sum up the character of an area in a semblance of a spatial association.

In such circumstances the problem of analysing cause and effect did not even arise. A nation, or a country might be summed up in terms of general characteristics but no assessment of the theory which created those generalisations was possible.

¹M. T. Hodgen, Early Anthropology in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, Philadelphia, 1964, p. 511.

²ibid., p. 459 and see above, p. 30.

Some form of abstraction therefore remained as a part of geographical description for a considerable period, well into the seventeenth century. Thus although bland general descriptions could be written on the subject of the nature of the Irish people, and Ireland, no contradiction was seen in divorcing people from places. Places, as in Gernon, were particular, but people remained general; towns were concrete, and yet their inhabitants were abstractions.

From extremely circumstantial detail Perrott³ conceived one answer to this problem. First of all he emancipated himself from one of the elements of Mediaeval and Renaissance History by endeavouring "more to write a history than to give preceptes". Moreover he did not "effect to please ichinge eares with paynted phrases, or to satisfy such as are more delighted with sound of words than with substance of matter ...". Unlike Campion he would not include fantasies for the sake of documentation. Indeed he dismissed authority.

"Few have set forth theyr [the Irish] remarkable deedes, savinge some friars or munckes and a few others, who tooke most things they wrote from hearsay and tradition, and sittinge in theyr cloysters could have little certayne or particular advertisements whereon they might build truth. Neither was theyr stile puer, or invention such as could content the curious or scarce satisfie an ingenious reader; for they were (for the most part) fraught with worthless relations, many times with fabulous narrations mercionage the greatest matters without method or addition of considerable circumstances."

Parts of this statement of purpose should not be taken literally, or at least they should be regarded as rhetoric, and the piece as a whole

³All references to Perrott are to his work The Chronicle of Ireland, 1584-1608, Dublin, 1933. See Appendix E for details.

seen as an invocation, to make effective ideas that were to awaken response in others. Even Cambrensis had regarded certain views from the past as erroneous.⁴ Nevertheless the paragraph is remarkable in that it contains at least three of the assertions associated with Perrott's period (the first quarter of the seventeenth century). These are: (i) the need to simplify style, (ii) the need to instruct as well as to entertain, and (iii) there is in the phrase "considerable circumstance", an explicit move against abstraction in history. Altogether this is a remarkable restatement of one of Bacon's chief objects and aspirations.

"Above all things", Bacon says, "(for this is the ornament and life of Civil History), I wish events to be coupled with their causes. I mean that an account should be given of the characters of the several regions and peoples; their natural dispositions, etc. etc. ... Now all this I would have handled in a historical way, not wasting time, after the manner of critics, in praise and blame, but simply narrating the fact historically, with but slight admixture of private judgement."⁵

Pervading Perrott's intention there is a distrust of "human understanding ... prone to abstraction".⁶ If he introduced a "geographical background" into his history it was not because the logic of origins or "the narrow cells of the human understanding"⁷ required it, but because he did not wish chronology to be regarded as an abstract series devoid of

⁴See above, p. 17.

⁵Cited by S. Toulmin & J. Goodfield, The Discovery of Time, New York, 1965, p. 108, De Dignitate et Augmentis Scientiarum, Bk. II, Chap. IV.

⁶Sir Francis Bacon, Novum Organon, Aphorism LI.

⁷Cited by B. Willey, The Seventeenth Century Background, London, 1953, p. 36.

"circumstance". He asserts - "for the better understanding of this history I have sette downe here some description of principall places ... else it cannot be soe well perceived how, where, and by whom those things have been done." Not only is a (naive) knowledge of places essential to history but also a close relation should be seen between events and geographical circumstance. An analysis of the country and the condition of the people is necessary if a true understanding of Irish history is to be acquired.

"By consideration studie to increase knowledge may finde that the fastness and dangerous difficultie of approachinge and assaylinge of thicke, but especially short and scrubbie, woodes and thicketts, deepe and dangerous bogges, steepe and craggie hylls and mountaynes, uneven and waterish places, straight and narrow passages, gives as great advantage to the defendants as disadvantages to the assaylntes."

Perrott's "considerable circumstances" may not be worthy of his conceptual framework. Nevertheless it should be pointed out that his outlook, though obviously a commonplace to politicians or commanders in the field, was largely absent from historical scholarship (wherein time and space might be logically reconciled but not related). Also it will be remembered that in many aspects Bacon himself had done little more than to conceptualise commonplaces, giving "a cooperative programme and sense of purpose to merchants, artisans, and philosophers, each of whom hitherto had seen only in part".⁸ It bears repeating that scholastic logic considered events as chronological abstractions withdrawn from ameliorating circumstance. In Perrot's view "consideration of circumstances must be conjoyned to the

⁸C. Hill, Intellectual origins of the English Revolution, Oxford, 1965, p. 87.

plane declaration of deedes". For a writer like Gernon, for whom description of places had nothing to do with their inhabitants, this was little short of a revolutionary doctrine. In short the literature of the period seemed to need a new technique (not new places) in which places might become less abstract and into which people (their history, their dispositions) might be easily fitted. Sooner or later someone would have to come to grips with a difficulty inherent in relating the two together. That difficulty was of course the problem of environmentalism.

With this motivating prospectus Perrott examines one of the concepts common to all forms of contemporary geographical literature - that of the qualities of a nation. Each of these qualities, he says, must be qualified, for the general and universal may be subject to exception in particulars. Bodin expressed a similar view. "All these things are general statements. Of course there are everywhere raving, melancholy, frenzied, and drowsy men; everywhere wise, strong, and moderate men. Yet in one place there are many more; in another fewer."⁹ Both therefore subscribe to a doctrine of dispositions. But in order to analyse these more closely Perrott divides these inclinations into two aspects - "the constitution of theyr bodies and condition of theyr myndes". The former is conditioned "accordinge to the naturall habite of theyr parentes, diet, ayer and exercise", and the latter by "faculties,

⁹ J. Bodin, Method for the easy comprehension of history, New York, 1945, p. 103.

organs, educasion and conversation". However "in both theise the soyle and scituation of the countrie, with the example of the countriemen where any persons have theyr byrthe and breedinge, hath a greate stroake to frame mens myndes into vertue or vice, boldness or bashfulness, moderation or extremmitie." He then gives examples of these "dispositions of the people".¹⁰

"Soe we see in the colde clymates, where the ayers are sharpe and the soyle most barren, the people are for the most parte quicke witted, nymble in body, redy to undertake, and active in spirite; where on the other side we see, for the most parte, such as have theyr birth and beinge in deepe and fertile soyles (the ayer beinge there foggie) they are commonly of a gravier temper and duller concept, sluggish and slow in action or invention."

In this there may seem little originality, for Bodin also divided the inclinations of a people into a dichotomy of mind and body.

"If Hippocrates truly thought that all species of plants can be domesticated, how much more is this true for human kind? Was there ever a race so huge and savage which, when it had found leaders, was not carried forward along the path of civilization? What race once instructed in the most refined arts, but ceasing to cultivate the humanities, did not sink sometime into barbarity and savagery? ... There can be no greater example of neglected discipline than that of the Romans. Although they formerly excelled all peoples in their reputation for justice and in military glory, yet now they are undone in both respects by almost everyone. Therefore I think that the innate character of the Romans, and indeed of the Italians, is highly praiseworthy; but there is no natural goodness so unbounded that it may not be corrupted by a perverse training."¹¹

Despite his immense documentation and undoubted ability to apply¹²

¹⁰Campion's phrase, see above, p. 32.

¹¹J. Bodin, op. cit., pp. 145-146.

¹²According to Tooley "his claim to originality rests on [the] re-orientation of traditional beliefs to serve a useful purpose. He applied the science." M. J. Tooley, "Bodin and the mediaeval theory of climate", Speculum, 28, 1953, p. 83.

ideas, Bodin never really analyses either his material or ideas. Bodin's study of "Correct Evaluation"¹³ is really a demonstration, an essay in establishing certainties.

"... So that we can test the truth of histories by just standards and make correct decisions about individual instances ... let us seek characteristics drawn, not from the institutions of men, but from nature, which are stable and are never changed unless by great force or long training, and even if they have been altered, nevertheless eventually they return to their pristine character."¹⁴

The nature of a people determines their government. And the nature of a people is in its turn determined by climate and astrology.

Perrott on the other hand is less concerned with maintaining a case. Rather he wishes to examine the degree to which a country affects its inhabitants. Thus although "nations ... have an aptness to concur in conditions suitable to the places and persons where and with whom they have their birth and bringing up" he does not subscribe to the theory that nations can be summed up in terms of characteristics purportedly held in common.

"It is true that in ancient times they made observation that such people inhabiting in such countries and climates had such faults, as the Carthaginians were said to be perfidious. But of these and other nations I thinke ... they are moved and instigated than altogether compelled by the climates wherein they live; ... we may then conclude that thoe the soyle breedeth some operation, yet education, custome, and conversation workes the greatest effectes in disposing of their myndes and manners."

Important as this conclusion is, its significance lies not so much

¹³J. Bodin, op. cit., Chap. V, pp. 85-152 passim.

¹⁴ibid., p. 85.

in the fact that the emphasis contradicts Bodin's determinist outlook, but also it is remarkable in the method by which it is arrived at. Perrott did not maintain a case to a certain conclusion. Indeed his conclusion comes almost as a surprise in view of the qualifications which had preceded it. His initial statement regarding the relation between history and geography would suggest that history was in need of a firm foundation in geographic "circumstances". Instead, he concludes, geography ("the soyle"?) is only partly responsible, with culture ("education, custome and conversation"?) having "the greatest effectes".

Bodin, on the other hand, did little more than maintain a single pre-determined choice between the alternatives. "My own opinion is that there is in the deeds and sayings of men, as in all things, a certain golden mean which is called 'constancy.'"¹⁵ And this "constancy" always controls his conclusion. There may be qualifications, as in the case of the relation between mind and body already quoted, but deviations are not permitted. Otherwise his political science would be lacking in "just standards" and "pristine character".

Perrott argues from the alternatives, weighing them against each other. Such phrases as "for the most part",¹⁶ and those qualificatory examples which seem to contradict his own viewpoint, e.g. the views of the ancients, show that his method is truly analytical in the modern

¹⁵ ibid., pp. 127-128.

¹⁶ It occurs three times in quotations used here, once in parenthesis.

sense (as opposed to rhetorical demonstration). This was part of his original intention of qualifying qualities.

There is, however, an implication in Perrott's study that qualities still exist. Indeed to qualify is partly to assert. This can be seen in a closer examination of the use of such terms as soil, climate and situation.

On occasion Perrott uses the word "soil" in what appears to be a restricted sense. That is, the upper surface of the earth capable (or incapable) of producing plants, e.g. "Soyle most barren". Although this particular example may be associated with "colde climates" the phrasing would suggest that the climate and soil are thought of as separate entities, and that they are meant to be distinguished. In other contexts, however, association between the terms is so close that there might even be mutual substitution by the reader. Thus "the soyle and scituation of the countrie" together have an effect on "men's myndes". Also, although the word soil may be qualified by the adjectives "deepe and fertile", the preciseness of the nomenclature may be doubted since Perrott immediately states that in such regions the air is "foggie".

Some associative methods may have disappeared, but others remain only to be qualified. Nevertheless, essentially, Perrott's analysis maintains judgement over concept, datum over moralistic symbolisation, and thing over pseudo-totality. Perrott did not treat "things and events as the signs of biblical or Aristotelian words".¹⁷ To read Perrott is to be aware of geography as "immediate experience" rather than the logically derived symbolisations apparent in Cambrensis and Bodin.

¹⁷A. Huxley, Heaven and Hell, Harmondsworth, 1965, p. 102.

CHAPTER VII

CHOROGRAPHY AS EMPIRICAL OBSERVATION

From the examination of Moryson's careful analysis of environment and its influences, it is clear that observation in association with criticism formed a not unimportant aspect of his geographical description. It remains the purpose of the present chapter to assess those aspects of chorographical literature which could be regarded as being akin to empirical observation: though of course within the more general context of attempting to understand the purpose and nature of chorography itself.

(i) Dymmok

Emery has referred to Dymmok as a "typical" chorographical author;¹ without "a long acquaintance with the places [he] visited, [he] tended to give a superficial view of things".

"His chorography was formal and sketchy ... A cursory list of products, a distorted account of the Irish, and the whole performance petered away into an outline of military deeds and government. Dymmok was equally selective in his particular description of provinces, counties and baronies, with only occasional notes about the nature of places."

¹F. V. Emery, "Irish Geography in the Seventeenth Century", Irish Geography, Vol. 3, No. 5, 1958, p. 264. All references to Dymmok are to his work A Treatise of Ireland in 1599, Irish Archaeological Society Tracts, No. 2, Dublin, 1842.

There can be little doubt that the treatise is the least interesting of all the descriptions presented here. But it is quite erroneous to regard the work as being completely "typical" of the age. It would be closer to the truth to say that Dymmok's treatise is chorography in its most pedantic, and least empirical form. The implicit purpose of the work would seem to be to present in as short a space as possible, as much information as the author could glean on Ireland. Consequently it is an injustice to other works to regard the treatise as being "typical". In fact Dymmok's work is almost a parody of chorography. It is only in that sense that it is included here as an example (it is symptomatic, rather than typical, of his age). The characteristics of chorography are therefore exemplified in Dymmok only in extremes. For example the quotation of authority assumes here the position of plagiarism. It is worthwhile to give an example verbatim:-

"Island Magee is a portion of land within three miles of Knockfergus, almost environed with sea, the headland thereof marketh the haven of Olderfleete; it is five miles long, but little more than a mile broad, all plain, without any wood, very fertile. It is almost all waste ..." (Bagnal, 1586²)

"Island Magi is a porcion of land invironed with sea, three miles from Knockfergus, the headland where of marketh Olderfleete haven: it is five miles and but a myle broade, very fertile and withoute woode but wasted." (Dymmok)

Other sources include Cambrensis, Campion, Stanihurst, and Spenser.³

Position and size are derived from Giraldus: the country, its nature and

²V. Bagnal, Description of Ulster in 1586, reprinted in C. Maxwell (ed.), Irish History from Contemporary Sources, London, 1923, pp. 259-266.

³Cited by the editor of the 1842 edition, op. cit.

fertility is derived from Spenser; and the people, their nature and customs, is abridged from Campion. This present author had discovered that the whole section on Ulster is practically a direct quotation of Bagnal. None of these sources are acknowledged.⁴ It is symptomatic, in support of the argument of a "mediaeval coherence" presented in the Chapter on Campion,⁵ that Cambrensis should be used as the authority to establish the primary description of the position and size of Ireland.

Notwithstanding the undoubted plagiarism the work is of interest since Dymmok had to fashion the sources into a coherent account. There are doubtful sections but the work as a whole, and the form in which it is organized, are worthy of scrutiny.

As intimated above Dymmok's emphasis is on information. Within this single short article he deals with topics ranging from geography through to present events. The different sections are as follows - Geographical Introduction, Taxation, Present Government, Division of the Country, a list of the Irish strongholds and their men of arms, and finally a narration of principal events of the Hugh O'Neill rebellion. This general format is essentially mediaeval, i.e. it ranges from topography through to history. But into Cambrensis' (and to a lesser extent Campion's) formula Dymmok fits pure factual information which he, presumably,

⁴Most authors mention their sources. For example, Sir John Davies quotes Matthew Paris, Cambrensis, Tacitus, Caesar, and Camden. Sir John Davies, "A discovery of the true causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued ... untill his majesties happie reigne", reprinted in H. Morley, Ireland Under Elizabeth and James I, London, 1890, pp. 272-273.

⁵See above, pp. 39-40.

considered as being useful to the general (bourgeois?) reader. This aspect includes taxation and present government, with, of course, chorography acting as the factual geographical component. This would suggest, in view of the context of Dymmok's use of chorography, that it was included as a means for presenting exact geographical information. The mediaeval associative method was incapable of doing so. For example, notice how he disassociates the Geographical Introduction (based on Cambrensis and Campion) from the Division of the Country (the chorographical portion of the treatise).

It is instructive to compare Dymmok's technique with that of Dallington in his contemporary accounts of Tuscany and France.⁶ Dymmok's work is certainly not so closely organised as Dallington's, but there are similarities. In both the main dichotomy is that between the Country and the Government. Dymmok, however, does not include the people, the governed, in the section devoted to government. Instead the nature of the Irish people is discussed in the general Geographical Introduction.⁷

⁶Summary of Dallington's method (after E. G. R. Taylor, Late Tudor and Early Stuart Geography, 1583-1650, London, 1934, p. 39.)

- A. Country
 - 1. Situation
 - (i) Cosmography, i.e. World aspect, Clime, Degree.
 - (ii) Chorography, i.e. the Region: length, breadth and circuit.
 - 2. Parts
 - (i) Individual: Cities: their number, population and buildings.
 - (ii) General: Mountains and valleys, their products.
- B. Government
 - 1. The Governor (a) Prince, (b) Law; (i) Ministers, (ii) Administration.
 - 2. The Governed: their nature.

⁷Dymmok's source is Campion's, History of Ireland, Chapt. V, "Dispositions of the People".

In Dymmok the nature of Ireland, and the nature of the Irish people are considered (logically) together (though not in a deterministic environmentalist sense). His introduction proceeds easily from position, through climate and the general fertility of Ireland to a description of the people, whereas Dallington divorces "the people" from "the country" completely. On the other hand, as has been pointed out above, Dymmok has completely separated his section on "the parts" of Ireland from his general description of the country. Dymmok proceeds from the general to the particular by fragmenting Ireland (chorographically) and by then considering the whole as the sum of its many "divisions".

It is obvious that Dymmok's treatise is really a mixture of many techniques, and is not the simple chorography which Emery considered it to be. The germ of this emancipated use of many sources was intimated in the appraisal of Campion. Further the confusing use of both mediaeval and chorographical methods is resolved if the treatise is seen as a body of facts, a collection of information. In support of this argument it is important to notice that Bagnal when he presented a completely factual description of Ulster's strongholds used the chorographical method. Nevertheless, despite this emphasis on "facts" Dymmok's world is still that of Campion and Giraldus:- "the hierarchy of ideas represents the immutable truth; the myth introduces time, space, and movement into this calm sphere."⁸

⁸ Jean-Paul Sartre, Introduction to J. Genet, Our Lady of the Flowers, New York, 1965, p. 47.

(ii) Bagnal

Induction is concerned with "irreducible and stubborn facts".⁹ However, some form of deductive coherence would be needed to draw these facts together (unless, as Montaigne believed, science could do little more than discover more and more facts). That is to say, in the words of Bertrand Russell, "if induction remains at all ... it will remain merely as one of the principles according to which deductions are affected".¹⁰ With specific reference to Elizabethan chorography, given that its emphasis on information is akin to the process of empirical observation, this is to ask the rather naive but vital question:- if Ireland is to be considered as the sum of many parts ("so far forth as it is divided into distinct parts or places") what view is to be had of the whole? This general control is not always apparent in the works studied here, nevertheless the relation between observation and deductive reasoning remains as the essential factor in understanding the nature of chorography.

(There is little at variance in this view with that commonly held as the characteristic problem inherent to the age. That is, as Sarton puts it, an ambivalent relation between philology and typography.¹¹ In geography it would take the form of an attempt to reconcile logical origins,

⁹ This phrase is that of William James but it entered into usage in A. N. Whitehead, Science and the Modern World, New York, 1964, p. 10.

¹⁰ B. Russell, Our Knowledge of the External World, New York, 1929, p. 36.

¹¹ G. Sarton, The Appreciation of Ancient and Mediaeval Science During the Renaissance (1450-1600), Philadelphia, 1955, passim.

topography and etymology, with observation as symbolised in map form:- cartography being the equivalent in geography of typography. The relation would be of even greater interest if it could be shown that chorography was a descriptive form dependent on cartography as a source of information.)

Bagnal's Description of Ulster might be described as an empirical essay;¹² indeed it may be regarded as an essay in applied chorography, for chorography is used as the geographical framework for an evaluation of fortifications in Ulster. As such the aim of the work is entirely factual (rather than pretending scholarship) and bears little resemblance to those treatises which retained the mediaeval scholastic tradition. Consequently Bagnal's work demonstrates the problem of how irreducible and stubborn facts are to be controlled in geography without the use of syllogistic inference. For it is a remarkable fact that geography has seldom been completely concerned merely with inventory and the discovery of additional facts, though it is probably in chorography that geography has come closest to that state, e.g. as in pedagogic "caples and bays" chorography. Van Paassen felt that it is the map which gave geography this unique position and, whilst this view is not to be considered without qualification, it does point to the control which spatial categories have given over geographical literature.¹³ And despite the fact that chorography may have been less concerned with space than with categories

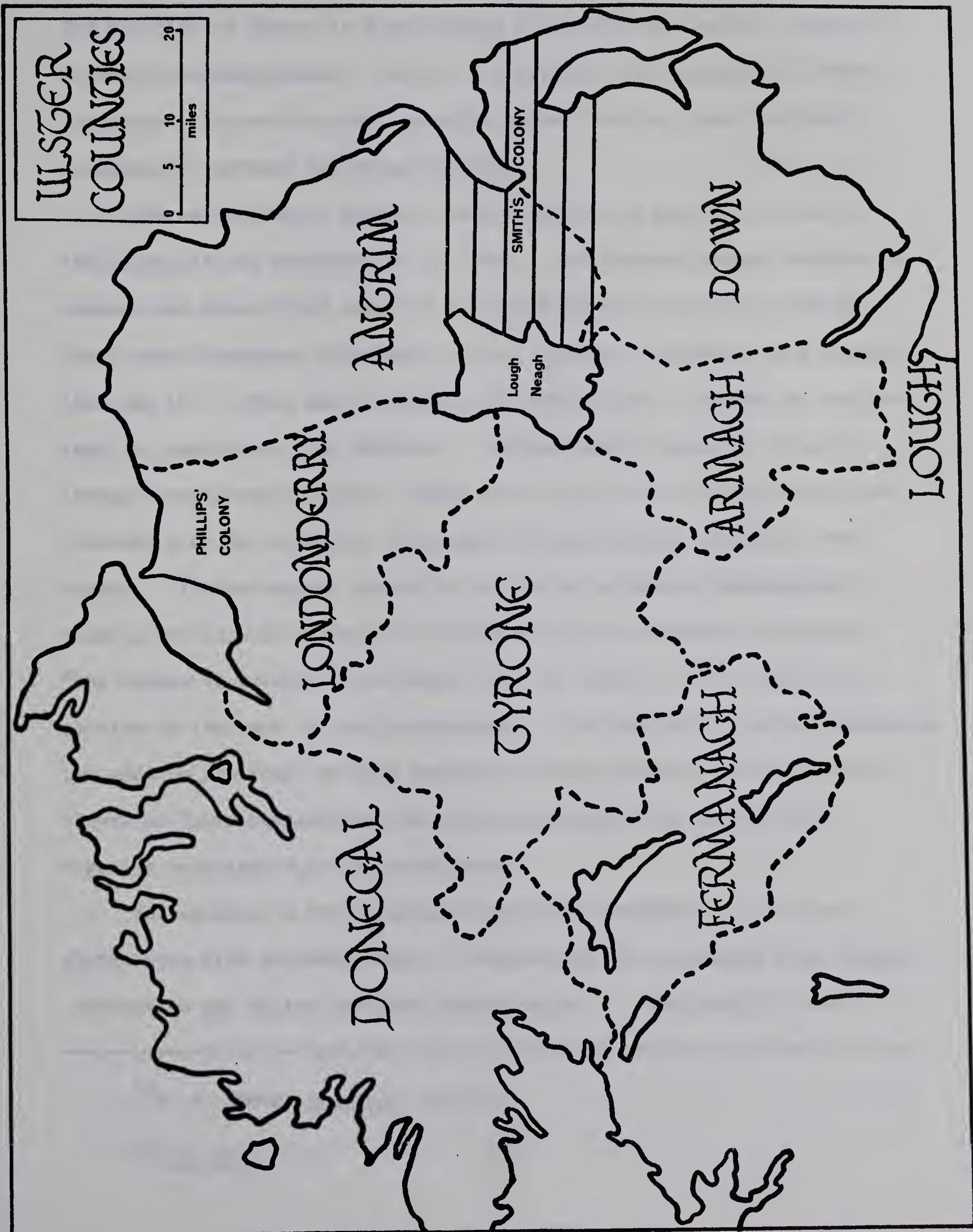
¹²All references to Bagnal are to V. Bagnal, op. cit. (footnote 2, p. 75).

¹³C. Van Paassen, The Classical Tradition of Geography, Groningen, 1957, pp. 51-52.

this is not to say that such literature necessarily lies outside the geographical tradition. It bears repeating that in chorography, as in geographical description in general, space, in the sense of areal distribution, is always implied in terms of categories of abstractions.

Bagnal, by deliberately limiting his topic to Ulster, presents a problem in that Ireland could be used neither as a category nor as an individuation. Payne¹⁴ (also Campion), on the other hand, in his paper on the Munster plantation managed to control his description by narrating hierarchical categories which had been initiated by the encompassing and assumed logical absoluteness of Ireland; that is, the categories, the province and the county, are not considered as compared to one another, as related objects, but as being related separately to their creator (Ireland). Bagnal, in contrast, begins by considering Ulster without feeling obliged to justify it as part of some greater whole. What Bagnal does is to differentiate Ulster not, of course, by comparison but simply by categorisation. Accordingly Ulster "lieth in the farther part north of the Realm. It is divided from Meath with the River Boyne upon the South-East part, and with the Brenny [Cavan] which is O'Reilly's country on the south part, and on the south-west part it boundeth upon Connacht, namely upon O'Rourke's country, and O'Connor Sligo; the rest is altogether environed with the sea". The position of Ulster is not therefore an aspect of "uniqueness"; it is not a "site"; and this position is not associated with "situation", or "nature", or "quality".

¹⁴See below, Chapter X.



MAP IV

The position of Ulster is simply where it is with but cursory reference to extra defining areas. Ulster is a category which happens to exist in space. The whole or the totality either does not exist or else it is taken for granted (as being implied).

Thereafter Bagnal employs the chorographical practice of using the county as the framework of his work. He draws a primary distinction between the three "old" counties (Louth, Down and Antrim) and the six "new" ones (Monaghan, Fermanagh, Tyrone, Donegal, Coleraine, and Armagh) (See Map IV). This was a conventional distinction; however he does not take it, explicitly, any further. Instead Bagnal takes an itinerary through contiguous counties; these are, in the order in which they are included - Louth, Monaghan, Fermanagh, Tyrone, Donegal, Coleraine and Armagh. If chorography should be defined as a form of geographical description in which there is no obvious explicit attempt to describe "the nature of places"¹⁵ (as Emery seems to imply it is¹⁶) then this portion of the work is pure chorography. The description of the remaining two (Antrim and Down) is more complex and they are best left until the nature of "pure chorography" has been discerned in an analysis of Bagnal's description of the other seven.

Chorography is obviously not completely empirical. It is an abstraction from an abstraction. Abstraction is its source even though information may be the end (the justification). Explicitly it is a

¹⁵F. V. Emery, op. cit., p. 264.

¹⁶loc. cit.

remembered or imagined description of the map. So that if it is concerned with irreducible facts, with inventory, it does so only through the restrictions of proxy. As such it could move in two directions: either closer to "reality" through personal knowledge and become more detailed than the map, or else shift into a simpler form. Pure chorography does the latter. In either case chorography would be less effective than the map since it would retain its propensity towards categories; it would remove the visual spatial component essential to the map. Though, and this is not paradoxical, it would also be space without space, because space is implied even when naive geographical elements, e.g. area and distance, are excluded. The "mapless" mediaeval description never considered space, and what is more important the reader is never made aware of it. The use of cartographic measurement (implied in chorography and unappreciated in rationalism) is the distinguishing factor. At this point there is a return to an original position; for the argument of this dissertation leads to the question of whether chorography can contain both the map and mediaeval continuity. Would, for example, the removal of cartographical space create the need for some literary mechanism to accommodate the obvious everyday existence of spatial categories? The answer to this question will be patent if the problem of "the nature of places" is ever entered into in a chorography. It is the aspiration of this present writer to show that both the surveyed map and mediaeval "qualities" were accommodated, without awareness of the logical contradiction, in chorography. In short Bagnal's work on Ulster exemplifies the use of "pure chorography" and concern for the nature of

places.

The simplest means of defining County Louth from a map is to say that it lies between Carlingford Lough and the River Boyne with the east by the sea. The western limits are not so readily distinguished. Bagnal is forced to neglect precision and say that "upon the west it confineth upon very barbarous countries". Drogheda, Dundalk, and Carlingford are mentioned as corporations. There are no geographical features in Monaghan which could be deciphered from a map, and Bagnal is consequently unable to give any information. There are no large rivers, mountains, or towns, and there is, of course, no coastline. (It is of interest that Bagnal's descriptions become less detailed in the case of inland counties - Armagh, Monaghan, and Tyrone.) Lough Erne gives a precise element for description in the case of another inland county, Fermanagh; the "country for the most part is very strong of wood and bog, especially near the great lake called Erne, wherein is divers islands full of woods." This fine description is followed by a brief summary of Tyrone. "The County of Tyrone containeth all the land from Blackwater to Lifford." Tyrone "containeth" as a category contains. It "containeth" those aspects which Bagnal was specifically interested in, i.e. the County of Tyrone contains three castles, Strabane, Dungannon, and Benburb; the last is mentioned as being situated on one of the defining elements, the Blackwater. He introduces a category within the category of Donegal. The Inishowen peninsula is "a promontory almost environed with the sea, namely with Lough Swilly on the south part and Lough Foyle on the north". It

should be made clear that the term peninsula does not occur anywhere in Bagnal's account. His emphasis is on defining limits, rather than generic terms. (The use of the term "promontory" for such a large tract of land as the Inishowen peninsula is really an example of descriptive analogy; this aspect of the chorography will be enlarged upon below.) Coleraine "lieth between Lough Foyle and the Bann". Armagh in the centre of the amorphous drumlin belt presents no obvious limits and description is therefore limited, except to mention a fort on the Blackwater. The city of Armagh is dismissed as "a small village having the church".

What should be apparent from Bagnal's chorography is that his categories, the counties, are not related to one another, and that the elements, the town-sites and the physical features, within the categories are not related either to each other or to a single category, other than being contained within one. Thus a county may contain anything from land, bog, and wood, to towns and perhaps even people. The "Inishowen country lying upon the sea and open to the isles of Islay and Jura in Scotland, is almost yearly invaded by Scots." These people are not engaged in inhabiting a certain area. They are only considered because they disturb, or invade, the category. The geographical features mentioned have little intrinsic importance outside the delimiting functions. This then constitutes the character of "pure" chorography.

Categories are still retained in the description of Antrim and Down, but their usefulness is enlarged by employing the vague concept of "country". This term often appears in the works reviewed in this

present work, but it is only in Bagnal's chorography that it assumes the proportion of a coherent means of geographical description. The term was normally applied to native Irish areas. For example, Sir John Davies distinguishes between "the Irish countries and the English colonies".¹⁷ It also referred to each individual Irishman's lands. Davies again, in a remarkable explicit definition, refers to "their cohabitation in one country or territory".¹⁸ The reference is to persons as much as to places. Indeed the two are synonymous, so that an implied relationship exists between the country and the Irish Lord, e.g. O'Cahan's country. Personal knowledge and the retention of categories add to Bagnal's control over the use of the "country" as a descriptive geographical term.

"The county of Down containeth these countries, the Lordship of the Newry and the Lordship of Mourne Iveagh otherwise called Magennis's country, Killultagh, Kilwarlin, Kinelarty, Clanbrassil McGoolechan, Lecale, Dufferin, Little Ards, Great Ards and South Clandeboye."

These diverse areas are not related; they are presented as a list of clearly defined places. It would seem that not even the concept "country" was capable of changing the chorographer's regard for the parts rather than the unity. Nevertheless it should be emphasized that this "organic" idea leads towards what in present terms would be referred to as "the nature of places". The categories define the place and the

¹⁷ Sir John Davies, op. cit., p. 275.

¹⁸ ibid., p. 293.

"organic" relationship implies the nature. Thus, "Killultagh is a very fast country, full of wood and bog; it bordereth upon Lough Neagh and Clanbrassil." Lecale "is almost an island and without wood." Note, once again, the absence of the general term peninsula, i.e. chorography dealt with isolated particularities not related generalities.

Dufferin "lieth upon the Lough which goeth out of the haven of Strangford" and "is for the most part woody ... Little Ards lieth on the north side of the river of Strangford, a fertile champion country ... Great Ards is that country which was undertaken by Mr Smith [in 1572]; it is almost an island, a champion [open] and fertile land ... South Claneboy is for the most part a woodland, and reacheth from the Dufferin to the river of Knockfergus."

Similarly, "Antrim, stretching from the haven of Knockfergus to the going out of the Bann containeth these countries - North Claneboy, Island Magee, Brian Canaghe's country, the Glynnnes, and the Route." The definition of North Claneboy is extremely clear; it "is for the most part a plain country, lying in length from the river of Belfast¹⁹ and Knockfergus to the Route, and breadth from the Glynnnes to the great Lough called Neagh". Here, for the first time Bagnal's account considers an area as encompassing both length and breadth. The description of Island Magee has already been quoted but is worth inserting here in its proper context.²⁰

¹⁹This is one of the few references in the literature of the period to Belfast. The river of Belfast was the Farset, not the Lagan.

²⁰See above, p. 75.

"Island Magee is a portion of land within three miles of Knockfergus, almost environed with sea, the headland thereof maketh the haven of Oldenfleete; it is five miles long, but little more than a mile broad, all plain, without any wood, very fertile."

The consideration of length and breadth is taken a stage further with the inclusion of exact dimensions. The concluding description of the Glens of Antrim may be regarded as a quintessential example.

"The Glynnnes so called because it is full of rocky and woody lakes, it stretcheth in length twenty-four miles (on the one side being backed with a very steep and boggy mountain and on the other part with the sea), on which side there are many small creeks between rocks and thickets, where the Scottish galleys do commonly land; at either end are very narrow entries and passages into this country, which lieth directly opposite to Cantyre in Scotland, from which it is eighteen miles distant."

There could not be a more succinct analysis of the position, extent, and topography of the Antrim Glens. Such an excellent description certainly justifies considering Bagnal's "country" as a technique concerned with "the nature of places".

There are aspects of this work which are indubitably suggestive of a closer understanding of the countryside; changes in the landscape may have made many writers more observant and aware, e.g. Moryson's and Campion's concern for the destruction of the Irish woods. Gernon even managed to include that topic in his microcosm-macrocosm analogy. With specific reference to Bagnal it will be remembered that he concluded his description of Island Magee by saying that it is "very fertile". But almost immediately he states:- "It is almost all waste." This is not a contradiction. Bagnal has here distinguished between a land which is inherently fertile, and one which, at the same time, is unused, or waste in the sense that the fallow land of the old three field system was termed waste.

Another term which is in need of clarification is "plain". It is almost certain, from an assessment of the nature of the areas to which it is applied, that "plain" does not mean a flat expanse of land; judging from the context in which it is used it probably means an area bereft of trees. That is to say, there is an unrestricted or plain view. A modern topographer chooses to distinguish between highland and lowland since altitude has the most obvious physical controls on both man and the landscape. In Bagnal's time this distinction was not nearly so vital as that between forested and non-forested areas. In fact the latter distinction should be regarded less as an evaluation of vegetative cover per se, than of a physical control as tangible as any highland zone. Except for his fine description of the Glens, Bagnal never draws attention to the mountainous areas - the Mourne Mountains are not mentioned. It is important to remember that Bagnal's object was to ascertain the state of Ulster defences, and that he was certain to place an emphasis on woodland since the woods were the "fast" areas, the strongholds of the native Irish. This purpose would in itself create a new form of literature; Bagnal's purpose was to instruct and inform, rather than to present a logical or morally uplifting treatise, as had been the mediaeval intent. It is in this "purposeful" sense that the work can be described as being inductive and as being concerned with "operationally defined facts";²¹ the categories are a crude means of

²¹This is not to say that isolation of elements need always be regarded as inductive reasoning. W. Bunge, Theoretical Geography, Lund, 1962, p. 2.

presenting and, to an extent, controlling these facts (that extent probably being the restrictions of presentation itself, i.e. it had become a formalised technique). The categories both contain and locate the facts. That is why each category is considered in isolation. Geography was to retain this utilitarian outlook for a considerable period; in this regard chorography must be respected as a naive presage of the politico-statistical school.

In order to provide this close analysis of Bagnal's description the theoretical examination has become fragmented. However if the main observed distinction between mediaeval topography and Elizabethan chorography is to be found in the implicit use of the map by the latter, then certain coherent theoretical implications will be discerned. The most interesting of these is one "which geographers have for so long only shallowly considered".²² This has been cogently expressed, in a slightly different context (Regional Systems) by David Grigg.²³ He writes:²⁴

²²idem., "Locations are not unique", A.A.A.G., Vol. 56, No. 2, 1966, p. 375.

²³D. Grigg, "The Logic of Regional Systems", A.A.A.G., Vol. 55, No. 3, September 1965, pp. 465-491.

²⁴These particular sentences by Grigg have caused controversy. Misunderstandings related to the topic of "exceptionalism" and "uniqueness" are avoided if Grigg's remarks are read only within the context of the additional parentheses. Also, specific references to W. Bunge, which initiated misunderstanding, have been omitted. See Bunge's comment on this specific quotation:- "Locations are not unique", A.A.A.G., Vol. 56, No. 2, June 1966, pp. 375-376; and Grigg's eloquent reply:- ibid., pp. 376-377.

"If we consider location to be an essential property of places, which are our individuals [as is, literally, the essence of mediaeval topography], we are presented with a considerable dilemma. All locations are unique by definition; hence, whereas location can be a property, it cannot be a differentiating characteristic, for a differentiating characteristic must be a property possessed in some degree by all members of the universe ... the map is [consequently] essential to areal classification and is indeed the only way out of adequately expressing location in a classification system."²⁵

In short, mediaeval topography is concerned with individual locations; where comparison ("differentiating") enters in it does so only to assert the properties of the preferred individual, in this case, Ireland. Whereas, the use of the map means that chorography is, in some form or other, concerned with universals and classification.

Here the theoretical argument must be related to Bagnal's pragmatic concern for information, and his emphasis on "purpose". With this relation in mind, Bagnal's classification may be termed an artificial one;²⁶ "it is composed of groups having only a small number of common attributes" and is consequently "useful only for the limited purpose for which it was constructed".²⁷ A problem remains however in assessing how useful this form of classification could be. Fortunately this has been

²⁵ ibid., pp. 476-477.

²⁶ "Natural groups class together individuals which have a large number of attributes in common, whereas in artificial groups the individuals concerned possess a much smaller number of common attributes." J. S. L. Gilmour, "Taxonomy and Philosophy", in The New Systematics (ed. J. Huxley), London, 1952, p. 466.

²⁷ ibid., p. 468.

facilitated by Grigg.²⁸ He stipulates three functions which a classification must perform.²⁹ These are:-

- (i) to give names to things,
- (ii) to transmit information,
- and (iii) to make inductive generalisations.

(i) This would seem to be the most patent function of Bagnal's chorographical classification. It combines two forms of naming. Firstly, there are local names; these are names derived from local Irish personalities, or from local characteristics, or from a combination of both. Secondly, there is the use of administrative divisions. According to Grigg the latter has an advantage in its precision, and uniformity.³⁰ That is, "names may have wide acceptance but rarely define the limits of an area with any precision", and also since local names "will have different names in different areas" there is "the necessity for a uniform classification system".³¹ Bagnal, however, avoided the extreme arbitrariness of the administrative division by interpolating local names. His chorography is therefore really a very clever substitute for arbitrariness; this very problem only received a general theoretical solution in the eighteenth century concept of the region. It is now at least partially

²⁸ D. Grigg, op. cit., pp. 469-470.

²⁹ ibid., p. 469.

³⁰ loc. cit.

³¹ loc. cit.

clear why everyday terminology is missing in the account. It will be remembered that such general terms as mountain, plain, valley, and peninsula are not included; the largest river in Ulster, the Bann, seemed to have little intrinsic importance outside its function as a county boundary, the imposed function that Bagnal saw fit to create for it. Bagnal's main concern was to avoid those very features which occur repeatedly over the earth's surface, by substituting local definition for general terminology; for example, "Great Ards (the name) is that country which was undertaken by Mr Smith (further identification); it is almost an island (precise delimitation), a champion and fertile land (its nature)." Indeed this close approximation of name with nature is almost mediaeval in appearance.

(ii) It can now be taken as self-evident that Bagnal's chorography transmits information, provided the reader recognizes the formality of the technique. The reader should consequently take its arbitrariness for granted.

(iii) There are no explicit inductive generalisations to be made from Bagnal's classification. There is too great an emphasis on local places, names, and personalities for Bagnal's classification to be related through comparison with other areas.

This would involve a return to the original proposition that induction might entail inductive generalisations. Chorography as a classificatory system must consequently be regarded as being an artificial classification designed merely to accommodate more and more geographical facts, and which would thereafter receive general acceptance as the handmaiden of many

simple and utilitarian purposes. This conclusion certainly justifies Leighly's position regarding "the traditional descriptions of political units".³² He says:-

"So long as the general view of the earth is limited to its geometric qualities - its size and form, and the distribution of land and water and of relief features as they are given by the numerical processes of mapping - the detailed results of such mapping may be combined with regional description as a convenient and not unreasonable background."³³

Chorography might even have retained the mediaeval concern for the "nature of places", as Bagnal attempted to do. (Emery seems to have overlooked the fact that the "nature of places" formed the essence of mediaeval regional topography.³⁴)

If this is so, is chorography to be distinguished theoretically from topography? It must, since it emphasised sites as much as "site", categories rather than pseudo-totality, observation as opposed to logic. This forms its noteworthy contribution to geographical thinking.

³²J. Leighly, "Methodological Controversy in Nineteenth Century German Geography", A.A.A.G., Vol. 28, 1938, p. 240.

³³ibid., p. 239.

³⁴F. V. Emery, op. cit., p. 264.

CHAPTER VIII

OBSERVATION, APPLIED KNOWLEDGE AND COLONIAL SCHEMES

It is clear that chorography is a technique capable of containing observation. In the remaining chapters an emphasis will be placed on applied knowledge as the characteristic advance made by the epoch. For the geographer the most significant aspect of applied knowledge, at least in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, is that of colonial or plantation projects. Indeed it is possible that colonies are as close as the social sciences will ever come to seeing controlled experiments.

Y. M. Goblet has shown how Sir William Petty, one of the greatest of the seventeenth century scientists, had been influenced in his political geography by the colonial situation in Ireland.¹ Petty's Down Survey, "the first atlas of a whole country to be compiled in the field",² was one consequence of the production of a large scale map (1:10,000) of lands forfeited for colonisation purposes. Also his last work, The Treatise of Ireland, "the very first plan for an experimental political geography

¹Y. M. Goblet, Political Geography and the World Map, London, 1956, pp. 5-8.

²ibid., p. 5.

based upon anthropogeographical observations", was an exposition on the subject of "colonial Utopias".³

How far Petty had been influenced either by the literature, or the colonial schemes of the past, it is impossible to say, nevertheless it is important to show that there are certain parallels and differences between his theories and the earlier colonisation attempts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The relevance of the descriptive literature must also be examined.

Before either of these tasks can be undertaken a brief review of Petty's theory should be made. Goblet has succinctly summarised it as implying

"one fundamental principle which may be termed the principle of intensity (intensity of action and intensity of results) ... the principle of concentration (concentration of territories, of population, of the economic and political control of the state)."⁴

In this respect the relation between the positional core (the capital) and the outer extent of the state (the agricultural domain, the state's frontiers) formed the basis of Petty's political geography.

Such an analysis would have been impossible with only Gernon's understanding of the relationships between areas. Where definition and description was restricted to towns, and where the areas between those entities proved to be abstractions, there was little possibility of

³ibid., p. 6.

⁴loc. cit.

appraisal of either position or extent, the two most vital spatial categories in Petty's work. Notwithstanding, Gernon's treatise is significant for its emphasis on place, an emphasis created by the exclusion or abstraction of that which could not be precisely defined. So that there is the paradox of abstraction investing the town with absoluteness, endowing it with, in the words of Aldous Huxley, "that more-than-symbolic meaning which is identical with being."⁵ The largest towns of Ireland, all ports and all founded on trade, were certain to impinge on any simplified geographical picture based on mediaeval cosmology, just as trade itself had done so much to destroy the isolation and lack of communication characteristic of mediaeval times.

"Comparatively late intruders [finance and trade] in a world dominated by conceptions hammered out in a pre-commercial age, they were never fitted harmoniously into the mediaeval synthesis, and ultimately, when they grew to their full stature, were to contribute to its overthrow."⁶

This absolute anomaly, a particular place, having little to do with its surrounding region, destroyed Gernon's world picture, and eventually created an abstract enviroing landscape.

What is more remarkable is that this very process of abstraction (isolating a town and thereby investing it with absoluteness) should also be apparent in the colonial schemes projected in Ireland. In Sir Thomas Smith's plantation scheme there are two main aspects, but both of these

⁵A. Huxley, Heaven and Hell, Harmondsworth, 1965, p. 138.

⁶R. H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, London, 1944, p. 23.

should be related to the general character of his ideas;⁷ for as

D. B. Quinn has said,

"Sir Thomas Smith's ideas on colonial policy were not particularly directed towards the solution of peculiarly Irish problems, but to those common to colonial enterprise in general, and might have applied equally to a colony in America."⁸

One aspect of this form of abstraction can be seen in the literature written by Smith advocating colonisation. In itself this literature is remarkable because it included the first paper ever published advertising a colonisation attempt. A. L. Rowse has gone so far as to describe Smith's tracts as encompassing the break between mediaeval and modern thinking.⁹ If by that Rowse is implying that the printed propaganda entailed both observation and analysis of the area to be planted, then Smith's literature is certainly not "modern". The only true evaluation of the area to be planted is in the introduction, where one of the advantages of the area was deemed to be its proximity to England. "The Ard", he says, "is the nearest part of all Ireland to Lancashire, and the [west] part of England." Generally speaking, however, the tract is somewhat disappointing as an analysis of an area. Instead, Smith

⁷Unless otherwise stated all references to Sir Thomas Smith are to his tract advertising his colony, as reported in Irish History from Contemporary Sources (ed. C. Maxwell), London, 1923, pp. 254-257.

⁸D. B. Quinn, "Sir Thomas Smith and the Beginning of English Colonial Theory", Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association, Vol. 89, 1945, p. 560.

⁹A. L. Rowse, The Expansion of Elizabethan England, London, 1955, p. 136.

chooses to give general reasons for colonisation, rather than reasons for choosing a particular area. The main propaganda point made by Smith was that of overpopulation in England.

"England was never that can be heard of fuller of people than it is at this day, and the dissolution of the abbeyes hath done two things of importance herein. It hath doubled the number of gentlemen and marriages, whereby cometh daily more increase of people, and such younger brothers as were wont to be thrust into abbeyes, there to live an idle life, since that it is taken from them must now seek some other place to live."

It would seem that what Smith called overpopulation was but a surplus of younger brothers no longer capable of maintaining themselves "in the emulation of this world with like countenance as the grounded rich can do". Smith is here employing a clever association of the common Elizabethan fear of overpopulation, with a supposed effect of the dissolution of the monasteries, to induce the type of person, the landed gentleman, whom he wished to take part in his scheme. Each of these well-to-do gentlemen would receive 255 acres of arable land

"intermingled therewith slopes, 'dips and bottoms', fit for pasture and meading and commodius to be annexed to the same ploughland, so that the whole may account to 300 acres at the least. I pray you tell me if you had so much good ground in Essex ..."

In short the younger brothers would be able to keep themselves in the manner to which they had become accustomed "in the emulation of this world". But Smith does not intimate whether the particular area he had stipulated was inherently capable of supporting these younger sons of English gentlemen. Certain parts of the terms stipulated may well be related to conditions in the Ards area; for example, the distinction between arable and pasture land is particularly important in the drumlin

countryside which forms most of the Ards region. Nevertheless, as a generalisation it is true to say that it was Smith's hope to transport English conditions into Ireland without due regard to Irish conditions. This is the inference to be drawn from the rhetorical remark in which he compares the Ards to "so much good ground in Essex".

Smith's ideas should not be considered in isolation. Bacon also presented a population argument as a motive for plantation of colonies;¹⁰ in this example he is speaking not of plantations in general but of the Ulster Plantation in particular. His argument is essentially a Malthusian one.

"An effect of peace in fruitful kingdoms (where the stock of people receiving no consumption nor diminution of war doth continually multiply and increase) must in the end be a surcharge or overflow of people more than the territories can well maintain."

By removing people from Great Britain "so shall your Majesty in this work have a double commodity, in the avoidance of people here, and in making use of them there".

Although the ideas of intellectuals like Bacon and Smith may have given coherence to the partially spoken deductions of practical men, in the field of colonial enterprise it is obvious that their deductive concepts distorted the facts (or avoided them) into the likeness of explanatory abstractions.

In another respect Smith's ideas (and to a lesser extent Bacon's)

¹⁰ All references to Bacon are to his work, "Certain Considerations touching the Plantation in Ireland", 1608, reprinted in C. Maxwell, op. cit., pp. 269-273.

show a certain concern for the area under consideration, but he does so only within the limits of his generalised theory. He advocated a plantation centred on a core area. The nearness of the Ards to the west coast of England was a contributing factor in this theory, so that it was at least partially founded in actuality (contrary to Quinn's opinion). He chose the town of Newtown Comber "by nature defense as a citadel". This area was to be the core for a larger settlement which would include a fortified zone of Belfast Castle, the abbey and priory of Masserene, Castle Mowbray and Castle Toome. According to Dewar, "in December 1574 he drew up the most minute and detailed plans for the project, nothing less than a complete blueprint for the organization and government of a colony".¹¹ In this project, as well as making a proposal for the foundation of a principal city to fit in with his core area theory, he also suggested that "all the marketing of the produce was to be centrally controlled and directed into England through a port chosen and planned by [himself]".¹² In addition, the area outside the core was to possess wooded areas as a provision for the settlers. (see Map IV)

This reasonably close analysis of the area is in direct contrast to the general policies put forward by Bacon thirty years later. Bacon's general theory is not related to local conditions. He sees advantage in an overall plan.

"Whatsoever is public, as building of churches, walling of towns, townhouses, bridges, causeways or highways and the like, ought not so properly to lie upon particular persons, but to come from the public state of this kingdom ..."

¹¹M. Dewar, Sir Thomas Smith, London, 1964, p. 164.

¹²ibid., p. 166.

But of the actual area Bacon takes little account. In fact his description of the qualities of Ireland is far more qualitative than any part of Cambrensis or Campion.

"For this island being another Britain, as Britain was said to be another world, is endowed with so many dowries of Nature (considering the fruitfulness of the soil, the ports, the rivers, the fishings, the quarries, the woods and other materials, and specially the race and generation of men, valiant hard and active) as it is not so easy, no not upon the Continent, to find such confluence of commodities, if the hand of man did join with the hand of nature."

Yet in the next section he gives warning that "in this region or tract of soil, there are no warm winters, nor orange trees, nor strange beasts, or birds, or other points of curiosity or pleasure ...". It is important to notice that the terms "region" and "tract of soil" are used as synonyms. At the same time it is equally important to remember that Bacon's scheme was designed to encourage a plantation, not to examine a region. This was why he was forced to conclude that only profit would motivate colonisation of the area, and to that end land should be cheap and transport for commodities licensed. In an attempt to make the region seem hospitable he contradicts himself. The essay intuitively admits difficult realities but permits vague, almost mediaeval, associations to form the explicit descriptive body of the work.

Smith, on the other hand, shows a complete understanding of the two spatial categories which Petty later held to be vital in the ordering of a state, i.e. position and extent. The naive relation between position and function is seen in his choice of Newtown Comber as a central area to control internal defense and external communication with the nearby

west coast of England. It is also apparent in his blunt admission "that you can do nothing till you have a strong town, as a magazine of victuals, a retreat in time of danger, and a safe place for the merchants."¹³ Further, the concept of an outer extensive zone is seen in his evaluation of march, and fuel resource areas.

It would be an injustice to Bacon to infer that he was incapable of estimating position and extent, for his essay includes a very interesting discussion of the relative merits of dispersed and nucleated settlement within a general theory of the site and situation of towns. He offers four advantages of towns.

"First, when men come into a country vast and void of all things necessary for the use of man's life, if they set up together in a place, one of them will the better apply the wants of another ... whereas if they build scattered, as is projected, everyman must have a cornucopia unto himself for all things he must use.

Secondly, it will draw out of the inhabited country of Ireland provisions and victuals and many necessities, ... whereas in the dispersed habitations, everyman must reckon only upon that that he brings with him, as they do in provisions of ships.

Thirdly, the charge of 'barons' ... to be made about every castle or house may be spared, when the habitations shall be congregated only into towns.

And lastly, it will be a means to secure the country against future perils ... the omission of which point in the last plantation of Munster made the work of years to be the spoil of days."

This theory is given sharper focus in some astute geographical observation.

¹³ Sir Thomas Smith, Calendar of State Papers in Ireland, 1583, pp. 490-492.

"If any man think it will draw people too far off from the grounds they are to labour, it is to be understood, that the number of towns be increased accordingly and likewise the situation of them be as in the centre in respect of the portions assigned to them: for in the champion countries of England, where the habitation useth to be in towns, and not dispersed, it is no new thing to go two miles off to plough part of their grounds; and two miles compass will take up a great deal of country."

The abstract character of his argument is patent; despite the references to particular examples, conditions in Ulster are not considered. It is as remarkable an appraisal of central place as are those of Smith and Petty. Remarkable not only because of the theoretical distinction (he gives abstract terms) between nucleated and dispersed (or "scattered") settlement, but also because he refers to a town, explicitly, as a central place. That is to say, he describes a town as being able to "draw out of the inhabited country ... provisions and victuals". The central aspect of a town's situation controls an area in all directions, within "two miles compass". Despite the common view of Bacon as the advocator of applied knowledge, it is clear that consideration of the particular area did not overly alter his logically derived theory. Theory and fact are not related. In fact, Bacon is repeating an argument based on the mediaeval concern for the relation between logic and origins. His argument was a common place to the epoch. Leone Battista Alberti's famous Ten Books of Architecture is based on such a premise. In establishing the logical place for the site of a house Alberti states:- "... for as the Region is a determinate and select part of the whole country so the Platform [the individual site] is a certain determinate

part of the Region taken up by the building."¹⁴ Turning to the city his advice is that

"your city ought to stand in the middle of its territory in a place from whence it can have a view all round its Country ... which may lie convenient for the farmer and ploughman to go out to his daily labour and return with ease laden with grain and fruits."¹⁵

That great realist Niccolo Machiavelli was not above speaking of first origins, or of premising "that all cities are founded ..." ¹⁶ The concern for foundation has already been related to logical origins and the concept for authority (implying foundation) as understood by the Romans. It is not altogether surprising then that Machiavelli should have opened The Discourses with a chapter describing "... the beginning of cities in general, and especially that of the city of Rome."¹⁷ It is significant that Smith should have used the example of Rome in his colonising scheme.¹⁸

Here, in the work of three of the Renaissance's greatest figures, can be seen the same problem of how logic was to be reconciled with applied knowledge. Alberti, who wrote the first modern work on town planning, presupposes a logical region and site. Machiavelli, the

¹⁴ Leone Battista Alberti, Ten Books of Architecture, London, 1955, (reprint of 1755 ed.), pp. 9-10.

¹⁵ ibid., p. 68.

¹⁶ Niccolo Machiavelli, The Discourses, Modern Library Edition, 1950, p. 105.

¹⁷ loc. cit.

¹⁸ M. Dewar, op. cit., p. 165.

archetype of the realist political scientists seeks to establish a founding authority on which to build his realist philosophy. And Bacon, the prophet of the empirical method, suggests a theoretical public plan to control the wilds of Ulster.

Obviously schemes of colonization cannot remain as deductive theory. Other schemes in Ulster such as those of Sussex and Essex, were abandoned because it was felt that more particular topographical descriptions were needed than those available in charts. It was almost a century before adequate maps became available, and even then Petty was forced to use deductive methods. Smith's deductive approach resulted in the inclusion of areas in his "core" with which there could be little communication. The difficulty inherent in any colonial scheme in Ulster was direct penetration into the interior. Four schemes were, more or less, centred on Belfast Lough (then known as Carrickfergus Lough), but only Smith attempted to link the area both North-West and South-East of the Lagan. This was virtually an impossible undertaking, for, as Emrys Jones has pointed out, at the beginning of the seventeenth century "the Lagan valley was a wooded barrier separating rather than uniting the counties of Antrim and Down."¹⁹ This area of the colony was aborted, to be taken over as part of another colony.

¹⁹E. Jones, A Social Geography of Belfast, London, 1960, p. 27.

CHAPTER IX

THE ULSTER PLANTATION AND CHOROGRAPHY

Camblin has shown how the towns and the settlers' proportions to be established in Ulster were planned on a county basis without due attention to physical conditions, or to what would, to present eyes, be considered as the region as a whole.¹ "It is clear beyond doubt that much more attention was paid to the characteristics of individual sites, than was given to the area to be served by each town."² Camblin points out that "the survey which had been made was also carried out county by county".³ Why then does Camblin insist in referring to the plantation as "a regional plan"⁴ (unless he inadvertently wished to impose present terms on an era to which they are ill-suited)?

Camblin has here posed a problem to which he could give only a partial answer. To the question of the allocation of town-sites he

¹G. Camblin, The Town in Ulster, Belfast, 1951.

²ibid., p. 21.

³loc. cit.

⁴ibid., Chapter 3, passim.

replies that "they were chosen with reference to military matters", and consequently, "the areas in which there were numerous forts in the occupation of the Army had a number of towns allocated, while areas in which adequate protection could not be guaranteed had few towns".⁵

This only explains the allocation of the sites and does not account for the attention that was given "to the characteristics of individual sites", which is the real problem. Moreover Camblin's answer does not explain why the county was chosen as the framework for "the regional plan".

It is clear that the initiation of this problem begins with the use of a present geographical concept as the standard criterion. The use of site and county is not to be judged simply as a consequence of the absence of the regional concept. However, before a more positive answer can be given to this problem certain negative reasons must be given to the question of why a naive regional approach (as in Reine geography) is not apparent in the literature of the period. In so doing there is a great danger of applying those anachronistic criteria which it has been the object of this dissertation to avoid. It should be made very clear that the region is here used not as a standard, but as a theory, or a model, by which sixteenth and seventeenth century views may be clarified, rather than judged. That is to imply that so far in this dissertation the geographical literature has been analysed on its own terms and merits, and that there has not been sufficient space devoted to inherent difficulties of describing Ireland.

⁵ ibid., p. 21.

Professor Evans⁶ has unknowingly⁷ given an excellent analysis as to why a naive regional description of Ireland would prove to be a difficult exercise. Professor Evans is here describing primitive man's attitude to Ireland.

"Ireland as man first saw it ... was an island of many mountain masses, varied in rock structure and shape, clothed with wild forests and separated by many inlets of the sea, by slow-flowing rivers and wide stretches of shallow lakes and plains."⁸

It is apparent that unity would have to be imposed on this formless island either through metaphysics (mediaeval logic) or the map. Evans continues:

"... this land of mountains has an extensive plain, averaging only 250' in height, set in its heart, while marginal plains are half-submerged in the north-east (Lough Neagh) in the north-west (Lough Erne) and the west (Loughs Mask and Corrib). Difficulties of communication are such that the Central Plain has never been central in anything more than name ... and the Shannon remains a boundary river throughout its course. The important part of the plain is the fifty mile stretch which faces the Irish Sea between the bays of Dundalk and Dublin, the heart of the old Kingdom of Meath and of the English Pale, and the setting of Ireland's capital sites from the sacred tombs of New Grange through the age of Celtic Tara to the historic city of Dublin."⁹

Any regional coherence which Ireland might have had was imposed through the Pale, and it is therefore not difficult to understand why these English geographers should choose the county and the city, both English institutions, as the frame for their descriptions. Moreover,

⁶E. E. Evans, Irish Heritage, Dundalk, 1942.

⁷That is, in an entirely different context.

⁸E. E. Evans, op. cit., p. 20.

⁹ibid., pp. 20 and 21.

it will be obvious, from Evans' account that one of the main causes of the 'shapelessness' of Ireland is its paucity of integrating river basins. The Shannon flows towards the west away from the Pale altogether. In addition, it may have been difficult to regard the Shannon as a river at all, it being instead a mere connecting link between a series of lakes. Demangeon has said - "In many cases it is impossible to say whether these lakes are expanded reaches of the streams, or drowned portions of the plain."¹⁰ And the same could be said of those lakes which Evans has mentioned all of which, not only seem to drown the landscape, but also break up the rivers into sections. The Bann is broken by Lough Neagh, and the Erne river is divided into three parts by the two Lough Ernes.

Gernon's description of the Shannon as the main vein of Ireland can therefore be true only in a logical sense. Nevertheless it is significant that Gernon should have chosen the Barrow, Nore, and Suir as the "three other vaynes"¹¹ of Ireland, for this is the only obvious drainage basin in Ireland in which the rivers are not interrupted by lakes. But even in this case there are difficulties. "Between the Liffey and the Barrow and between the Barrow and the Shannon, for instance, there is no perceptible watershed."¹² Moreover, the Barrow has often been as great a division in the Irish landscape as the Shannon for it was formerly regarded as the frontier of the English Pale, and there is

¹⁰A. Demangeon, The British Isles, London, 1955, pp. 122-123.

¹¹See above, p. 55.

¹²A. Demangeon, op. cit., p. 121.

an Irish saying - "that they dwelt by west the law which dwelt beyond the river of the Barrow."¹³

By the reign of James I the county had become the sole acceptable means by which English law and authority might be effectively maintained or extended in Ireland. Sir John Davies, one of the chief advocates of the Ulster Plantation, wrote:-

"if any of these three kings [Henry II, John, or Richard II] ... had ... divided their [the Irish] several countries into counties; made sheriffs, coroners, and wardens of the peace therein; ... taken surrender of their lands and territories, and granted estates unto them to hold by English tenures; granted them markets, fairs and other franchises, and erected corporate towns among them - all which hath been performed since His Majesty [James I] came to the crown - assuredly the Irish countries had long since been reformed and reduced to peace ..."¹⁴

This is one reason why both the chorographers and the plantation organisers chose the county as the framework for organising their work.

But in both cases (chorography and colonisation) the county was a scheme ill-adapted to Irish conditions. It is possible in the first light of Hakluyt's masterpiece, and in the expansion of Elizabethan England, to forget that England was an extremely provincial society. A man's sentimental attachments were to his county, rather than to the vague abstraction, England. Indeed The Principal Voyages etc. can be regarded as a cause rather than an effect of Elizabethan patriotism. As Campbell has said of the writers of propaganda literature:- "These

¹³Attributed to Sir John Davies.

¹⁴Sir John Davies, "A discovery of the true causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued ... untill his majesties happie reigne" reprinted in H. Morley, Ireland Under Elizabeth and James I, London, 1890, p. 270.

men were not merely reflecting contemporary opinion, they were helping to create it."¹⁵ It was in particular and immediate localities that Englishmen thought of England. It could not have been otherwise in a country of such poor communications, and in which the local Justice of the Peace, rather than Member of Parliament in distant London, acted as the representative of government. Lambarde, who wrote the first county history, and who could be said to have begun the geographical renaissance in England, also wrote a treatise on the office of Justice of the Peace.¹⁶ Unfortunately the county would rarely be the reflection of local sentiments and conditions in Ireland. The county as an English institution could hardly mirror Irish geography. Although in England a county geography was entirely justified, indeed it proved the basis for excellent chorographies provided, as Emery rightly points out, the author was "an interested man, rooted in his region through long residence and land ownership",¹⁷ in Ireland the county could only revert to barren definition and static summaries of supposed limits. It is only in this context that the county may be recognised as a 'substitute' for the region; an author might associate the county with personal sentiments, in much the same manner as Bagnal managed to associate personalities with particular areas.¹⁸

¹⁵M. Campbell, "People too few or too many" in Conflict in Stuart England, (ed. B. D. Henning), London, 1960, p. 175.

¹⁶A. L. Rowse, The England of Elizabeth, London, 1950, p. 36.

¹⁷F. V. Emery, "Irish Geography in the Seventeenth Century", Irish Geography, Vol. 3, No. 5, 1958, p. 263.

¹⁸See above, p. 86.

But, as has been said, such a technique was inapplicable to Ireland. Sentiment for particular areas degenerated into reverence for definition. This is not to deny that the county was a vital method of describing areas. Campion, writing in 1577 before the creation of the seven counties which were to be planted, describes Ulster as follows:-

"wherein O'Neill and O'Donnell are chief Irish, containeth the counties Louth, Down, Antrim ... Chief town of Louth, Dundalk, of Down, Down and Carlingford, of Drogheda, Drogheda, of Antrim, Knockfergus ... This part is dissevered from Meath and Leinster by the river Boyne, which breaketh out beside Lough Foyle, a bog between Armagh and Saint Patrick's Purgatory."

Campion is quite explicit regarding the three eastern counties (see Map IV) naming their chief towns, but when he comes to the area to the west without the framework of the counties he becomes completely disorientated. He mistakes the Boyne for the Bann and makes it wrongly enter the sea "beside Lough Foyle". As Maxwell noticed:- "his topography is confused".¹⁹ Without the precise mappable limits of the county Campion's chorography would not exist. There is no need of a regional view here: the case does not even arise.

Moryson, writing after the establishment of the other counties, is more explicit, but he shows that he is entirely dependent on the county, just as Campion was, and that he is not making use of it as a tool for regional analysis. He (Moryson) divides his account of Ulster into two sections. "The next part to the Pale and to England is divided

¹⁹C. Maxwell, Irish History from Contemporary Sources, London, 1923, p. 312.

into three counties - Louth, Down, and Antrim; the rest contains seven counties - Monaghan, Tyrone, Armagh, Coleraine, Donegal, Fermanagh, and Cavan."²⁰ So strong is the county hold over Moryson that for the sake of definition he divides Ulster into two on the sole basis of the creation of two sets of counties at different times. He was just as dependent as Campion on the county. That is to say, the county is not a tool, or a substitute, it is an end in itself. In this context the county chorography is not a degenerate form (of regionalism) but a vital and effective method. It may even have been the chorographical county, and the chorographical concern for "sites" which controlled the thinking of the plantation organisers. It is almost certain that "cartographical-chorography" was their only medium by which they could understand the area.

²⁰F. Moryson, An itinerary ... etc., Glasgow, 1907, Vol. IV, p. 190.

CHAPTER X

TWO EXAMPLES OF COLONIAL PROPAGANDA LITERATURE

(i) Payne

There are degrees of abstraction. And geography need not necessarily be grounded in "immediate reality". Some of its supposed realities may become no more than concepts. This has happened at least twice in the history of geography, when the idea of the region came to have a distinct a priori control of the discipline. The mechanistic eighteenth century concepts terminated only in the empiricism of the Forsters, and in the advocacy of a systematic (general or abstracted) geography by Bucher. Similarly, many years later, Kimble dismissed the "unique" (he implies mediaeval) attitude towards the region.¹ Like Sauer he wanted a general phenomenological definition, i.e. geography is concerned with diverse phenomena rather than a single phenomenon (the region). So that the absence of the regional concept need not necessarily weaken descriptive geography. Such abstract ideas as the economic

¹G. H. T. Kimble, "The Inadequacy of the Regional Concept" in London Essays in Geography, ed. L. D. Stamp & S. W. Wooldridge, London 1951, pp. 151-174. "The standard-model region ... was sired by feudalism and raised in the cultural seclusion of a self-sufficient environment ... it owed almost as much to history as to geography." supra, p. 169.

possibilities of a particular area may well integrate a study as effectively as any conceptualised find the region dogma.

Although Payne's description falls within the same category as Phillips' project² - it is an advertisement for a particular region with a view to plantation - unlike the latter, Payne makes no attempt to describe the region (Munster) with which he is concerned. His interests did not lead him towards what Goblet has called an "intense" outlook.³ In this sense Payne's ideas are abstract. There is no concentration on outlets for trade, or on the development of communications and towns. He limits himself to that feature which Phillips later ignored, the farming of "the lands abroad". The plantation of Munster was an "extensive" one controlled by landowners who were to farm large tracts of land, called seignories, each 12,000 acres in extent. Ulster, on the other hand, was colonised by farmers who were permitted but 2,000 acres each. Towns were to constitute its basis and consequently the plantation of Ulster had a more "intensive" aspect.

The organisation of the work is an amalgam of extreme detail and vague generalisation. The latter is a consequence of an attempt to make Ireland seem a hospitable place to live in; whilst the former is a function of his detailed knowledge of the plantation of Munster. Payne as a planter and expert in agricultural pursuits was in an excellent position to provide

²See below, p. 126. All references to Payne are to his "Brief Description of Ireland", (1589), reprinted in Irish Archaeological Society Tracts, 1841.

³See above, p. 96.

information on precisely how the land of Munster should be farmed. He was an improver, a man who believed in techniques. The title of a tract which he had written in 1583, is a fair reflection of his faith in practical methods.

"Payne his Hill-mans Table, which sheweth how to make Ponds to continue water in high and dry ground, of what nature soever. Also the Vale-mans Table shewing how to drain moores, and all other wet grounds, and to lay them dry for ever."⁴

His table was part of the extraordinary growth of what L. B. Wright has termed "usable compendiums of facts ... the Tudor and Stuart counterpart of the modern fifteen-easy-lessons which lead to bourgeois perfection".⁵

He begins with a general introduction to Ireland following the normal chorographical procedure of dividing it into five provinces. Only then does he describe Munster the province with which he is most concerned. This, he says, has seven counties with "two very rich counties called Kennory and Conelogh both within the countie of Limericke". Next, in a sentence, he assesses the relation between the situation and the climate of Ireland.

"The countrie is situated somewhat nearer the Equinoctial line than England, but yet for that it lyeth more upon the Ocean seas and is full of Rivers and small brookes, it is not so hot in summer as England, neyther is it so colde in winter, for that the seas fretteth away the Ice and Snow there, much more than in England."

This qualitative, but measured, descriptive of the Irish climate is

⁴Irish Archaeological Society Tracts, 1841, p. vi.

⁵L. B. Wright, Middle Class Culture in Elizabethan England, Chapel Hill, 1935, p. 121.

followed by one of the few entirely quantitative sections found in this early literature. The map was rarely used as an illustrative tool in any of the descriptions. Phillips' documents of 1622 are the only pieces of literature to be accompanied by maps. It is all the more remarkable, therefore, that Payne should include a brief dissertation on "the generall Map of Ireland".

The map which he refers to is probably the map of England and Ireland published by Mercator in 1584, in his edition of Ptolemy's geography.⁶

"The general map of Ireland which is joined with the old Map of England, is most false ... The author (as it seemeth) drew them both by reporte, and the common computation of miles; and made his scale after the English measure that is one thousand paces ... but therein he greatly deceived himself: for the shortest miles in England are much longer than that measure, and an Irish mile is longer than two of those miles, by which means he hath made the Map of England less by the half than it should be. Notwithstanding, he hath overreached in his number of parish Churches, and the Map of Ireland little more than one fourth of what it should be, if it were drawn."

This plea for accurate cartography may be regarded as a presage of Petty's survey. In parenthesis it should be added that Payne was completely qualified to criticise in such an authoritative manner. His tract of 1583 included a guide on "how to measure any rouse ground, wood or water, that you cannot come into".⁷

His criticism should be regarded as an implication of what Petty was to repeat explicitly in his Political Anatomy (1672) almost one-hundred

⁶ Irish Archaeological Society Tracts, 1841, p. 17n.

⁷ ibid., p. vi.

years later: "Get ye best map of ye country."⁸ As a practical man Payne saw the advantage of maps only in accurate survey and precise results. The interest of his assessment of Mercator lies, therefore, not in its negative chastisement, but in the positive benefits which he sought. That is to say, that knowledge does not rest in the ability to question ancient authority. For Campion and Moryson observation merely involved putting the authorities to isolated empirical tests; for Payne a new age meant the possibilities of new techniques.

It is in the map that measurement is first perceived in geography. With specific reference to contemporary Irish maps Andrews says that,

"most ... are chiefly concerned with place names, territorial boundaries, water, hills and town sites". So much so that "a close study of the whole series will ... reveal matter to interest the student of vegetation, land use, roads, urban morphology, pre-sixteenth century antiquities, and even geology."⁹

Descriptions, on the other hand, are less edifying. In an attempt to assess the forest cover of the period McCracken refers to the descriptions as being "too general to be used".¹⁰ Payne would have agreed. Though not explicitly he dismissed the descriptive method of synthesising particularities into a generalisation. He says "... some of small

⁸Y. M. Goblet, Political Geography and the World Map, London, 1956, p. 21n.

⁹J. H. Andrews, "Ireland in Maps: a bibliographical postscript", Irish Geography, Vol. IV, No. 4, 1962, p. 235.

¹⁰E. McCracken, "Irish Woods circa 1600", Irish Historical Studies, Vol. XI, No. 44, September 1959.

judgement (which think every soil good that lies beneath long grass) have failed of their expected crops ...". Here Payne is not criticising literary descriptions per se but, as in the case of his cartographical criticism, the non-analytical eye in general. He would prefer to estimate qualities in terms of precise quantitative detail.

On occasion, however, Payne's eye is not that of a farmer, but of a man of commerce evaluating possibilities for investments. He does not regard the Munster plantation as a settlement of people but as an investment by the undertakers. He recommends an improvement in the coinage of Ireland so that industrial crops could be produced by the colonisers.

"I would to God her Maistie would coin four hundred thousand marks of the same, and lend it to the English merchants gratis for two years, to be imploied there in mather, woade, rape, hoppes, hempe, flaxe, and such other commodities, as might set some great number of our Englishmen to work: by which means (in my judgement) the land might be very well peopled ..."

It will be apparent that Payne was by nature an economist. Such a description is not given lightly; for it is a radical one. R. H. Tawney has devoted much space to show that even in the England of the early seventeenth century, to discuss questions of economic organisation purely in terms of pecuniary profit and loss still wears an air of not quite reputable cynicism.¹¹ And yet these are the precise criteria which Payne employs, i.e. "pecuniary profit". Rarely are areas mentioned except as acreages of holdings. A farm of 400 acres could support "60 milche kine, 300 ewes, 20 swine, and a good team of horses". Or a

¹¹R. H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, London, 1944, pp. 14-55.

family of twelve (the owner, his wife, two servants and eight children) could be kept on 31 cattle and 110 sheep.

"I find by experience (N.B.) that a man may store 1,000 acres of wood land there for thirty pounds bestowed in swine, which being well husbanded will yield more profit than so much like ground in England of ten shillings the acre and five hundred pound stock for in the Irish wood lands there is a great store of very good pasture and their mast doth not lightly fail, their swine will feed very fat without any meat by hand. 30 pounds will buy 30 bores and 200 sows with pigs, the increase of which will be sufficient for 1,000 acres ..."

The contrast between this analysis and Phillips' is an interesting one.¹² Phillips tentatively suggested introducing swine and hops but there is no real economic analysis. Payne on the other hand details the economics, but he does not relate the prospects to any particular region. Phillips suggested the woods of Loughinisholin as an area for breeding swine, but he did not suggest that "experience" had led him to such a conclusion. The sole occasion on which Payne mentions a region or relates his economic calculations to a specified area is when he speaks of his ideal planter, a certain Master Beecher. This Master Beecher

"hath a great part of a proper country called Kenallmechie about three miles from Tymoleagne, and six miles from Kinsale, both market and haven towns the farthest not a mile from the main sea; through this country runneth a goodly river called Bardon wherein is great store of fishes of sundry sorts, especially Salmon, Trout, Ells ... In this country is great woods the trees of wonderful length which sheeweth the excellent fruitfulness of the soil."

Payne, in this last remark, is guilty of some of the generalisation which he had denigrated in others.

¹² See below, p. 130.

Payne's "region" is an idealised one, and is but a compound of his economic schemes. It should not be considered as an actual description or analysis of that area. If Payne's plantation views could be summarised as the aspiration to introduce such profitable enterprises as industrial crops and swine rearing into Munster, then his conception of an optimum "region" would be an area close to the sea by a safe harbour, and well endowed with good woods. Moreover as a well-to-do gentleman a "goodly river" was also desirable for fishing.

Payne's evaluation of the region may seem a mere relation of economic ideals, and whatever analysis there is would seem to deal with actuality only by implication. But however abstract these economics may appear it is important to note that they are applied. The theories do not remain burdened in abstracted categories. In fact there is a complicated amalgam of experience, ideas, and application. The description is an essay in economics as conditioned by the possibilities of a particular area. As such it may be regarded either as applied economic theory, or systematic economic geography. In either case it is important to note that Payne is constantly applying his ideas, and testing them in actualities. Unlike Perrott his ideas are not restricted to pure theory without examples.

The description is not a regional account. As an estimate of economic possibilities in Munster it should be classified with those works which Hartlib later described as demonstrating "the Common Good of Ireland, and more especially, ... the benefit of the Adventurers and Planters therein". It exemplifies what may be referred to as the scientific description of the land in Ireland, though pre-dating Boate

and Petty by over fifty years. It will be remembered that his plea for accurate cartography anticipated Sir William Petty by a similar period of time.

(ii) Phillips

The degree of control, and the amount of understanding which mediaeval ideas and county-chorography gave to geographical literature, must not be underestimated. Without these formalised and generally accepted shibboleths no coherent literature, and perhaps, as was tentatively asserted in the chapter on the Ulster Plantation, no understanding of areas would have been possible. It is therefore instructive to examine a work in which these formulas are not employed. Payne only partly suits this purpose, since his introductory portion is still the general standardised one. Gernon overthrew chorography only to replace it with two mediaeval schemes. The partial emancipation of these two writers demonstrates Notestein's point that England "in Elizabeth's reign and even up into the early Stuart period was still mediaeval in its fundamental concepts."¹³

T. W. Moody noticed how formless Sir Thomas Phillips' Project ...

¹³W. Notestein, The English People on the Eve of Colonisation, New York, 1954, p. 26.

was.¹⁴ Moody, the authority on the Plantation of Ulster, correctly describes the Project as a lengthy and rather formless document, and as suggesting a far more ambitious undertaking than was actually carried out.¹⁵ But so far as the geographer is concerned it is in these two very judgements that the interest of the document lies. Briefly, the position of a geographer regarding such a document is that of contrasting the local knowledge of a man who had lived in a district for many years, with that of the specialist geographer. Gilbert Ryle has made this contrast lucidly apparent.¹⁶ The local man

"knows all the roads, lanes, streams, hills and coppices: he can find his way about in all weathers, lights and seasons. Yet he is not a geographer ... In discussing the district he mentions all the features that the geographer might mention, yet he does not say the same sort of things about them. He applies no geographical generalisations, uses no geographical methods of mensuration, and employs no general explanatory or predictive theories."

Geographers have perhaps eulogised such local knowledge, this being the point, as Bunge inelegantly put it, where geographers get "stuck"

¹⁴Phillips' project for plantation is reprinted in Ulster Plantation Papers, 1608-13, presented by T. W. Moody in Analecta Hibernica, No. 8, 1938, pp. 179-297.

¹⁵T. W. Moody, The Londonderry Plantation, Belfast, 1939.

¹⁶G. Ryle, The Concept of Mind, London, 1949, p. 304.

over the problem of uniqueness.¹⁷ In other words, Ryle's complete distinction between the specialist (scientist) geographer interested only in generalities, and the local man concerned with particularities (immediate subjective knowledge), is not one which geographers themselves have either strictly maintained or, perhaps, recognised. Certainly that distinction was not maintained in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. "The chorographer's attitude of mind and appraisal was accepted almost as a matter of course by men of affairs at all levels."¹⁸ Any form of literature concerned with place, places, or nations, followed the rules of chorography. Otherwise "if he be altogether ignorant [of "the Art of Cosmography"]", he shal, like a blind folded man, not know

¹⁷W. Bunge, "Locations are not unique", A.A.A.G., Vol. 56, No. 2, June, 1966, pp. 375-376.

Isaiah Bowman in his classic study of The Andes of Southern Peru uses local authority as the basis of his study. He begins the work: "Let four Peruvians begin this book by telling what manner of country they live in. Their ideas are provincial and they have a fondness for exaggerated description: but, for all that, they will reveal much that is true because they will at least reveal themselves. Their opinions reflect both the spirit of the toiler on the land and the outlook of the merchant in the town in relation to geography and national problems. Their names do not matter; let them stand for the four human regions of Peru, for they are in many respects typical men." Op. cit., p. 1. There is a complete association between Bowman's "typical men" and the region, otherwise there would be little effect in revealing themselves. Professor Evans' use of a mythical "primitive man" (see above, p.109) is a similar means of associating both man and region together in order to provide the latter with a measure of integration. In view of this it would seem that Gernon's use of a microcosm-macrocosm analogy is not quite so naive as it might appear. The same should be said for Giraldus' mediaeval topographical and regional account.

¹⁸F. V. Emery, "Irish Geography in the Seventeenth Century", Irish Geography, Vol. 3, No. 5, 1958, p. 263.

where he is, or which foot first to set forward."¹⁹ Similarly the traveller should

"containe under this Art, Corography, and the knowledge of those Kingdomes which he is to passe, they being most necessary for his use. Also it is fit for him, as well to observe the old as the new names of each place, which gives great light in the reading of old writers."²⁰

Geography, without the common use of the map, was for Moryson, the author of this advice, a literary exercise, suitable for Everyman. But what if the author was not concerned with large areas, or Kingdoms? How was he to discover information and organise his study if the area was either too little known for any literature to have been written, or so small that it was barely worth considering? These were the difficulties which Phillips faced. Stated abstractly they are really a single problem which was inherent in the whole period considered in this dissertation. That is to say, the great difficulty was that there was no informative technique capable of describing areas (outside chorography in which, according to Moryson, local knowledge did not occur). This is once again the problem of inference, of where geographical information was to be acquired. The problem was shelved, not solved, by limiting the geographer to objectives "most necessary for his use". It was Elizabethan chorography which established geography as a utilitarian subject.

¹⁹F. Moryson, An Itinerary ... etc., Glasgow, 1907, Vol.III, p. 376.

²⁰loc. cit.

The region which Phillips wished to see planted was the most inaccessible part of Ireland (see Map IV). The County of Coleraine and the Barony of Loughinisholin were "the most dangerous place in Ireland".²¹

"Remote and difficult of access from Dublin, linked up with the country of O'Donnell and O'Doherty on the west, and with that of the Scottish MacDonnells on the east interlocked on the south-east with the great O'Neill fortress, and within easy reach of Scotland, from which war supplies could be obtained, O'Cahan's country (County Coleraine) proved in the wars of Elizabeth's reign to be a strategic area of the first importance."²²

This region would be rather difficult to integrate. There are two reasons involved. Firstly, in the area within which Phillips is advocating a plantation, the possibility of the river Bann acting as an integrating factor is foregone due to (i) a rock bar near its mouth, (ii) the disruption caused by Lough Neagh (the largest lake in the British Isles), and (iii) the river itself acts as the boundary between on the right bank County Antrim and on the left the Counties of Coleraine and Tyrone. Secondly, the Bann (like the Shannon) flows away from "the Metropolitan area"²³ of Ireland, which in this its North East corner is centred on Knockfergus, and the East of County Down, where two colonies had been established previously. In quite a short distance the Bann flows from the sheltered Irish sea to the open Atlantic.

As revealed in The Project Phillips' means of overcoming these

²¹Sir Thomas Phillips, cited in T. W. Moody, op. cit., p. 103.

²²T. W. Moody, op. cit., p. 53.

²³E. E. Evans, Irish Heritage, Dundalk, 1942, p. 21.

problems was to use Lough Neagh, one of the few Irish lakes which lies in isolation rather than as part of a line or group, as a central clearing area for products which would be exported from Knockfergus and Newry. Phillips' proposals might not seem radical. He is simply trying to demonstrate the proximity of the north coast between the Bann and the Foyle, to the already established "metropolitan area".

"From Lough Neaugh, they [the London Companies] may transport commodities by boat within 12 or 13 miles of Newry, where they must have a castle or fort to receive such commodities as they send out of Tyrone and other parts, as also such as come out of England. It is very fit and commodious to have storehouses at Newry, for, many times in the winter, a ship finding her lading ther will make a voyage befor she can get about the land to Loughfoyle, and the danger is not so great."

Later he demonstrates the advantages of Knockfergus; Lough Neagh is only twelve miles away and there is no necessity for "the shipping to go about in the winter". Unfortunately, according to Moody, the sole means of communicating with Coleraine was by sea following the coastal route between Coleraine and Derry.²⁴ Phillips' linking of these two regions though unrealistic is important in that it ignores the chorological distinction between the "old" and the "new" counties as described by Phillips' contemporary Moryson.²⁵

The remainder of The Project retains this indifference to chorography with, in addition, the prevalence of the formlessness which Moody pointed out. It would be best first to examine Phillips'

²⁴T. W. Moody, op. cit., p. 52.

²⁵See above, p. 113.

interests inferentially, and then to describe exactly how uncontrolled those interests are. There are three implied aspects which are, in the order of their importance:- position, products, and towns.

As regards position it was Phillips' intention to show the London Companies exactly where northern Ulster was, and to demonstrate its relations with the rest of Europe, so that they should have no fears as to trade. The best example of this wide respect for position is a discussion of the profits from fishing off Portrush, which develops into a description of French (Breton?) enterprises, and of the possibilities of a fish trade with some of the Roman Catholic countries. Fish are "a great commodity in Spain, especially in the Condada, for there they are sold by weight and bought by them of Castellia, La Viezia, Cordona, Salamanaca, etc." Also "the rays in the river of Nantes likewise sell well, for they are carried up the river of Loyer, and the country next adjoining." Other considerations of position are less important. It is close to the isles of Scotland for the fishing there, and for profitable trade in cattle, hides and wool. Joists might be exported to Scotland itself, other parts of the English seacoast, and even to Spain. From these examples it will be obvious that Phillips' examination of the relation between trade and position would not have occurred in any other context but that of a colonisation scheme; it would not appear in a chorography.

Phillips' account of products is more a relation of possibilities than of actualities. He discusses development in three related topics - the woods, cattle, and tillage.

The woods of Loughinisholin were to provide all forms of timber mainly for export - pipe-staves (for barrels), joists, slap-boards, wainscot, and longboards - as well as for ship-building. Carpenters were to cut and frame the timber in the actual woods to make it easier and cheaper to transport. Production from the woods was not to be extractive alone, for these carpenters would provide the nucleus of a community which should breed swine for bacon and pork. He suggests that "devices of mills as Dutchmen have them" should be introduced to cut the timber into planks.

On cattle and tillage Phillips is not particularly informative. Beef, hides, and tallow are possible exports. He remarks on the cheapness of the Irish produced barley.

"So by reason of the undertakers' [coloniser] tillage it will be cheaper and yield great profit to transport it to other counties." Phillips is however ignorant of the amount of land available for plantation. "What acres there will be in that scope of country I cannot tell by reason of the bogs and woods, neither do I know how far these limits shall extent."

This is an explicit example of how ill-defined Phillips' concept of the country was.

When he comes to discuss towns he is a little more precise in his assessment and definition. Coleraine and Derry, the new towns, would both be of the same size with one hundred houses each. Three new bridges should be built, but he does not stipulate where these should be. On "the lands abroad", i.e. outside the areas of the two main towns which were to have common lands of their own, "there should be at the undertakers charge twelve castles or bawnes, according to the situation of the places which may be made more defensible than the castles." Once again he does

not state exact position; it would seem that Phillips' understanding of external relationships was more complete than his comprehension of internal ones. But it is interesting that, in fact, twelve proportions were eventually created.

Even from this analysis of the implied ideas running through the work it is clear that Phillips seemed incapable of defining his knowledge with precision. This aspect of the work becomes more apparent when the form in which it is organised is examined. In this respect Moody's description is if anything an understatement. Phillips' tract is completely lacking, not only in contemporary chorographical categories, but also in any sense of order, and in the most elementary fundamentals of sequential arrangement. The impression is of someone writing in an extreme hurry in the hope that one idea will flow into another as the account unfolds.

It would be impossible to convey through description the organisation of The Project, but some idea of its formlessness may be gained from the fact that in this short account the woods are mentioned in seven separated and unrelated sections, and aspects of agriculture are divided over another four diverse paragraphs. Phillips was indeed emancipated from form but to the point of chaos. It would seem that the alternative to his own contemporary formalistic shibboleths was disorder. Perhaps the only fact which held the work together was the need to extol the virtues of the area which he himself had colonised, and in which he wished others to colonise. This may be the answer to the problem with which this particular chapter began, i.e. the relation between the search

for a named and formalised order, the Elizabethan need for "an ordered universe where there was no waste and where every detail was a part of nature's plan",²⁶ and the local geographer. It may be true that "an interested man, noted in his region through long residence and land ownership, could write a clear and balanced word picture of the country",²⁷ but it is equally true that he also needed the framework of the county to guide him, help him the presentation of his information, and, most important, present that information in the first place. The two examples which Emery quotes to support his argument bring this very point out:- Carew's Survey of Cornwall and Reyce's description of Suffolk. Phillips ignored the county; but in his failure to describe an area solely within the abstract concept of "position", Phillips demonstrates how vital chorography was, not simply as a method, but as a means of understanding areas, and of giving those areas that semblance of shape which is the touchstone of bona fide geography.

But the pervading influence throughout The Project is that of action and the attempt to apply knowledge in a particular area. The formlessness of the description is largely the consequence of the incoherence inherent to any project controlled by action or applied knowledge alone.

²⁶E. M. W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture, London, 1948, pp. 78-79. Sir John Davies' trust in self-knowledge was based on the premise that "Nature fails us in no needful thing".

"Since Nature fails us in no needful thing
Why want I means my inward self to see?"

Nosce Teipsicum (1599)

²⁷F. V. Emery, op. cit., pp. 263-264.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

And though perhaps I am ignorant of the places, yet
will I take the map of Ireland and lay it before,
and make mine eyes, in the meantime, my schoolmasters,
to guide my understanding to judge of your plot.
Edmund Spenser, A View of the Present State of Ireland.

One of the easiest of the ways to pedantry in a work of criticism is to establish a body of laws or principles by which every other work may be judged. In such a view any material which does not accord with the predetermined principles is categorised as extraneous, or perhaps, at best, as being one of the author's personal eccentricities. In either case the preconceptions always remain, and understanding stops where those principles were initiated. In the history of geography this has taken the form of advocating a "Geographical History of Geography". This pedantry has led J. K. Wright into a rather peculiar position where any material which does not relate to "the geographical" is dismissed as irrelevant. Wright states that true geographical

"images have been distorted and discoloured by the quality of the minds in which they have been lodged; they have been blurred by accumulations of extraneous (sic) lore in these minds and confused by other thoughts."¹

¹J. K. Wright, "The History of Geography: A point of view", A.A.A.G., Vol. 15, 1925, p. 201.

It will be apparent that this 'geographical point of view' is part of that unfortunate use of present geographical concepts as principles by which past works may be examined (more often judged), already discussed in this dissertation. As Wright well knew this outlook is not one which will lead to understanding; since it is not based on sympathy with the original material, that material is in a sense irrelevant. What remains is a geographical history of geography in which historical origins are dismissed. In short, there is a history of geography without any history.²

Some understanding of the original period literature has been presented in the dissertation.

It has been shown that mediaeval topography was a logically derived system by which 'present' areas could be described on a non-cartographical basis. The method was concerned with the nature, the essence or the qualities of a particular place. It was logic which determined this essence and not, or so it would appear to present eyes, what the place actually was. Logic controlled observation. And the general effect was to present each place in its uniqueness.

The nature of a single place formed a logical origin for descriptions in the sixteenth century (Campion). The logic of the method was contained in the use of past authority either in the form of direct quotation of founding sources, or by employing etymology as a means of defining both the nature and the existence of a place (Camden and Moryson).

²Appendix D is presented as a fuller discussion of this problem as it relates to the history of geography in general.

In this respect the position held by Gernon proved to be a crucial one. Gernon's microcosm-macrocosm analogy, as a system which established the total properties of an area, could not deal with function since an object could not be related with other objects. As in Moryson these properties were transferred into words. The process has been well described by Ivins as the "transference of reality from the object to the exactly repeatable and therefore seemingly permanent verbal formula".³ So that "an essence is ... not part of the object but part of its definition".⁴ The parallel with Gernon is made even clearer when Ivins suggests that

"from the point of view of visual awareness ... the object is a unity that can not be broken down into separate qualities without becoming merely a collection of abstractions that have only conceptual existence and no reality."⁵

Gernon's Ireland is an entity in which the visual component cannot be isolated as in perspective or the map. It is a "non-pictorial space in which each thing simply resonates or modulates its own space in visually two dimensional form".⁶ Only with the use of chorography either as an abstraction from an abstraction (description contained by a map) or as applied knowledge, is it possible to perceive a space that "can be filled

³W. Ivins, Jr., Prints and Visual Communication, London, 1953, p. 63.

⁴loc. cit.

⁵loc. cit.

⁶H. M. McLuhan, The Gutenberg Galaxy, Toronto, 1962, p. 16.

in bit by bit"⁷ with functional three dimensional entities. In the words of McLuhan:-

"The map brings forward ... the isolation of visual sense as a kind of blindness ... The arbitrary selection of a single static position creates a pictorial space with vanishing point ... And it is the sense of sight in deliberate isolation from the other senses that confers on man the illusion of the third dimension ..."⁸

It has been implied that the distinction between observation and logic is not as vital a one as that between logic and applied knowledge. The additional information and observations made available by the Geographical Discoveries would not necessarily create a new form of literature. This cliché has been too easily incorporated into the general thinking on the period. It is but another way of searching for a "geographical" explanation in the history of geography. It may be true that the Discoveries made more geographical works possible, but as E. G. R. Taylor has said, "the sudden supersession of the stereotyped pre-Columbian system of cosmography ... brought bewilderment as well as revelation".⁹ So that before any progress could be made mediaeval conceptualism would retain much of its original strength as a logical system. The problem of the Elizabethan period was the reconciliation of logical systems with the new emphasis on information which the rise of an interested middle-class demanded; or as Marshall McLuhan has put it:-

⁷loc. cit.

⁸ibid., p. 11

⁹E. G. R. Taylor, Tudor Geography 1485-1583, London, 1930, p. 1.

"It was the new middle-class wealth and skill that translated the chivalric dream into the visual panorama. Surely we have here an early phase of 'know how' and practical applied knowledge such as in centuries to come was to create complex markets, price-systems, and commercial empires ..."¹⁰

This knowledge was applied as much to the recreation of antiquity (anti-quarianism), as to the creation of new colonial worlds. McLuhan has referred to this recreation as "a kind of applied archaeological knowledge".¹¹ He has gone so far as to suggest that it led to "... two centuries of mediaevalism of a scope and degree unknown to the Middle Ages themselves".¹²

The distinction between mediaeval and modern is not so much a contrast between observation and logic as that of one between logic and applied knowledge. That is, "the mediaeval Book of Nature was for contemplatio like the Bible. The Renaissance Book of Nature was for applicatio and use like movable types."¹³ It is therefore in colonial schemes that the historian of geography discovers the paradox of logical origins and founding authority used as a basis for action.

The problem of inference, of where information and observation was to be acquired, was overcome by a later age. Ritchie has used the example of Defoe's Robinson Crusoe to clarify the point.¹⁴ Crusoe would

¹⁰H. M. McLuhan, op. cit., p. 118.

¹¹loc. cit.

¹²loc. cit.

¹³ibid., p. 185.

¹⁴A. D. Ritchie, History and Method of the Sciences, Edinburgh, 1958, p. 42.

be handicapped in those observational sciences which depended on the cooperation of a number of different observers, past and present, as in either geography or history. The single individual can but keep a personal inventory of things on the island, or maintain a chronicle of events. Riesman has extended this same point by similarly using Crusoe as an archetype.

"He used a variety of techniques, such as first person narration, elaborate descriptions of food, clothing and shelter, diary-like accounts of transactions, and collaborative witnesses to provide a realistic setting ... For him life is lived in its detailed externals; symbolic meaning must be filtered through the strenuously concrete."¹⁵

Despite a lack of resources Crusoe proved adaptable and resourceful, "able to translate one kind of experience into new patterns. Defoe's work is the epic of applied knowledge".¹⁶

The late sixteenth and the early seventeenth century did not fully possess this ability.

¹⁵D. Riesman, The Lonely Crowd, New Haven, 1965, p. 93.

¹⁶H. M. McLuhan, op. cit., p. 185.

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APPENDIX A

Biography and Bibliography for the lesser figures and works

CHAPTER II

Giraldus Cambrensis (1146?-1220) was probably the most important "geographer" of the twelfth century. His work included tidal observations of the Irish Sea and Bristol Channel, histories of Wales and Ireland, as well as a description of Ireland. His Topography of Ireland (1188) acted as a model and a standard until the sixteenth century when it was reprinted in Holinshed's Chronicles. Camden used that source extensively. Since the last edition of Camden was in 1789 it is justifiable to conclude that Cambrensis was influential for a period of over six hundred years. However, it should be remembered that his works were written in Latin and that Holinshed's edition was a translation. Camden, of course, wrote in Latin also.

Cambrensis was representative not only in the sense of being historically influential, but also because he was recognised as an important figure in his own time. He lectured at Oxford and accompanied Henry II's son John in his journeys to Ireland (1184-1186).

CHAPTER III

Edmund Campion (1540-1581) was the first Catholic martyr in England. As a Jesuit he is naturally associated with the Counter-Reformation, and with the changes in thinking which this brought to sixteenth century

England. In his history of Ireland (written 1569, printed 1587) he attempted, quite explicitly, to bring a more scholarly approach to bear on the chronicle form of historical literature. In this he was not very successful mainly because he was ignorant of the native language of Ireland. However, it is important to note that the History of Ireland was written in English and that Campion quarrelled with Stanihurst who preferred the Classical approach. The History ranks as one of the most important prose works of the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER IV

Fynes Moryson (1566-1630) spent ten years travelling around Europe, and wrote an enormous (folio) description of his experiences in the various countries (1600-1603 in Ireland) which he visited. In one sense his descriptions are ad hoc in that they are concerned with travellers' tales of the Mandeville variety. But Moryson also followed the consistent approach which is exemplified in his description of Ireland (situation, fertility, trafficke and diet). Throughout the work there is an ersatz amalgamation of present events and strange happenings, with scholarly and astute observations. In this sense the work is considered to be quintessential of the age. But (despite being written in English) the Itinerary (1617) was so bulky and expensive that it sold few copies. The work was typical of the age, but, unfortunately, not very influential. When it was reprinted (in 1907) it was of historical interest only.

CHAPTER V

Little is known of the life of Luke Gernon. His description is perhaps the only known biographical evidence which there is. From this it is inferred that he was a merchant who lived in Limerick. It is almost certain that he was no scholar, and that his sole reason for writing the description was to present Ireland in a favourable light in an age when the country was commonly represented as being in a state of near chaos. Gernon was a common man in an alien country who attempted to create better trade relations with England (Limerick was essentially an English town at this time) by presenting a mediaeval microcosm-macrocosm analogy. It would seem that the Elizabethan merchant had the same need for order as the Elizabethan poet. In this Gernon represents the strange contradictions of the age.

CHAPTER VI

Sir James Perrott (1571-1637) was the bastard sone of Sir John Perrott one of Elizabeth's most able administrators in Ireland. His interests in Ireland were varied. He commanded a company of men at Newry, acted as a guide to English statesmen, undertook to colonise in Ulster, and was even exiled there for a short period. These are in addition to his scholarly and philosophical interests. His knowledge of the country was therefore extensive, ranging from politics to philosophical matters.

The work itself is in a rather unfinished state; so that its present form owes much to interpolation and careful editing. However, the earlier portion, used in this thesis, is reputed to be much the same

as the original, with but few addenda or marginalia. The work was intended as a continuation of the existing chronicles of Ireland, and may even have served the purpose of supplementing Moryson's work, but it remained in manuscript form until it was issued by the Irish Manuscripts Commission in 1933.

CHAPTER VII

Dymmok's description acted as an introduction to a military history of recent events in Ireland. As a military history its reputation is greater than Perrott's work. The description of Ireland is culled from various sources and was probably never intended to be taken as an original contribution.

Marshal Bagnal, like Perrott, commanded a company at the town of Newry; Perrott, Dymmok and Bagnal have therefore a common military background. This may well have affected the quality of their work and the nature of the observations which they were concerned with. The latter two had less concern for scholarship. The form of Bagnal's work is undoubtedly closer to that of a report than either Dymmok's or Perrott's.

CHAPTER VIII

Sir Thomas Smith (1513-1577) has been described as an intellectual in politics. He was closely associated with both scholarly circles and the court of Elizabeth. It was probably this combination which has given him the unique position of being the first person ever to publish an advertisement for a colonisation project. Smith's tract must be regarded as an example of the use of typography in association with

applied knowledge; in this respect Smith is a good example of the possibilities of his epoch.

CHAPTER X

Little is known concerning Payne. As in the case of Gernon the biographical data must be inferred from bibliographical sources. It is conjectured that he was a surveyor, or perhaps even a map maker; he was almost certainly concerned with practical land measurement of some kind. It was this background which possibly led to his appointment as an overall surveyor for the Undertakers (or colonisers) in the Plantation of Munster. At any rate he was a practical man and not a scholar; his main interest was the efficient application of knowledge.

Sir Thomas Phillips was, by comparison, almost an adventurer. He spent most of life travelling Europe as a mercenary. When he came to Ulster he established a successful colony at Limavady. This experiment, in one of the most difficult and dangerous parts of Ireland, led him to suppose that a more ambitious scheme was practicable. His Project was a tentative evaluation of the area with a view to plantation. He was the most instrumental figure in getting the London Companies to back his scheme. This despite his subsequent disillusionment with their indifferent approach. His work must be respected as both a unique and influential document, i.e. influential in that it led to action at the highest level.

APPENDIX B

Campion's History

Chapter	I	The Site and Speciall parts of Ireland.
	II	The temporal Nobility.
	III	Nature of the soil and other incidents.
	IV	Of the Irish tongue and the name Hibernia, Ireland.
	V	Dispositions of the people.
	VI	Of the meere Irish.
	VII	The most ancient Inhabitants of Ireland.
	VIII	The several Inhabitants of Ireland from Bastolemus.
	IX	The arrival of the Spaniards then called Iberians into Ireland.
	X	The coming of the Picts into Ireland.
	XI	How the Irish settled themselves in Scotland.
	XII	The Conversion of the Irish to Christianity.
	XIII	Of Saint Patrickes Purgatory
	XIV	The Irish Saints.
	XV	The most notable events from Saint Patrick to Henry II.

APPENDIX C

William Camden's association of etymology, place, and the nature of Ireland
(William Camden: Brittania, ed. R. Gough, 1789, Vol. III, p. 463)

In the Vergivian sea, so called, not a vergendo as some imagine, but from Mor Weridh, by which same it is called among the Britons, or from Farigi, the Irish name for that sea, the renowned island of Ireland fronts the west side of Britain. It held the third place antiently among all the islands of the world. For thus the antient geographer writes of islands: ... q.d. "Among islands the first for extent and celebrity is Taprobane in India, next to that Britain, and the third another British island Hibernia", whence Ptolemy calls it Britannia Parva or Little Britain.

Orpheus, Aristotle, and Claudian, call it Ierna, Juvenal and Mela Ivverna, Diodorus Siculus Iris, Marcianus Heracleota Ioyepnia, Eustathius Oyepnia and Bepnia, the inhabitants Eri, the Britans Yverdon, and the English Ireland.

The etymology of these several names has given rise to various opinions as is natural on so obscure a subject. Some derive Hibernia ab hiberno tempore (the wintry weather), others from Hiberus, a Spaniard, others from the river Iberus; the author of the Eulogium from a chief called Irnalphus; Postellus in his public lectures at Paris on Mela, in order to appear profoundly learned, deduces it from the Hebrew, Irin quasi Jurin, the land of the Hebrews; "the Hebrews (says he, indeed!) being very learned magicians, and knowing that the empire of the world

would be founded in a very strong corner to the north-west, make themselves masters as soon as possible of those parts and of Ireland, and the Syrians and Tyrians crowded to settle there and lay the foundations of the future empire." The reader will forgive my refusing my assent to these opinions, or even to the received one about the hibernum tempus, though I have read, that every wind that blows makes winter in this island. Hibernia, Juvena, and Oyepnia, certainly came from the Ierna of Orpheus and Aristotle; and as well as Iris, Iverdhon, and Ireland from the Eri of the inhabitants. From Eri therefore, we are to seek the origin of the word. Here with the great philosopher's ΕΠΕΞΩ I forbear, nor have I any conjecture to propose, unless it may be derived from Hiere, an Irish word, signifying west or the westward, whence Eri or the western country may be deduced. I once thought this a fortunate conjecture, both because it is the most western part of all Europe (being only twelve degrees from the utmost point in that quarter), and because the westernmost river in this island is called by Ptolemy Iernus, and the most westerly cape of Spain, whence our Irish came, is called by Strabo Ierne, and the river near it, the most westerly in Spain, by Mela is named Ierna. From this westerly situation Spain is called Hesperia; the western point of Africa Hesperium Cornu: and in Germany itself Westrich, Westphalen, etc. are so called from their situation, so that it is no wonder this country should have its name from its westerly situation. Besides the names of Ireland above-mentioned, the Irish bards celebrate in their songs Tirvolac, Totidanan, and Banno, as much the most antient names of this island. On what account I have not been able to discover, unless Banno be Bannomanna

mentioned by Pliny from Timæus in his description of the extremities of Europe and the coast of the northern ocean to the left from Scythia to Gades; but geographers have not yet determined what the Bannomanna was. For the rest, Biaun signifies in Irish holy; and it is certain, that Festus Avienus calls this Insula Sacra in his poem intituled "Ora Maritimæ", compiled from the most antient geographers Hecateus Milesius, Hellanicus Lesbicus, Philæas of Athens, Caryandæus, Pausymachus Samius, Damastus, Euctemon, and others. But I shall set down the lines when after speaking of the islands Ostrymides he thus proceeds: ...

In two suns' course a ship from hence can make
The Island by the antients Sacred call'd,
That 'mid the waves a length of verdure shoots,
Completely peopled by the Hibernian race:
And next to this the isle of Albion lies.

APPENDIX D

Contemporary notions and the history of geography

One of the most noteworthy attempts to follow the narrow edge between the "period" approach to history and that type of history which seeks only the present in the past, is Lucien Febvre's A Geographical Introduction to History.¹ Referring to Bodin's use of astrology as a determinist influence on man he states roughly what this paper has attempted to demonstrate. Bodin's sixteenth century ideas do not directly accord with present scientific ideas. They are "dreams" ... "chimeras for which the age was responsible; but from among them we should pick out carefully Bodin's own ideas, and his scientific, or at least reasonable observations".² This would seem to be J. K. Wright's view. But Febvre continues:

"And is that possible? Is there really such a gulf between the two kinds of statement? As far as Bodin himself is concerned, are not his astrological 'dreams' directly responsible for a certain number of his 'scientific' reflections, or what claim to be such? But above all, and in a more general way, is not this influence of climate, for him, a fact of the same order, and does it not work in the same fashion as the obscure, mysterious, and in part secret influence of the stars and of the Zodiac?"³

¹L. Febvre, A Geographical Introduction to History, London, 1950.

²ibid., p. 6.

³loc. cit.

If nothing else this remarkable statement shows how dangerously naive any a priori assertions may be, whether they are maintained by Wright or this present writer. Thus Febvre, with his "general" viewpoint, is perfectly correct in asserting that the idea of geographical "influence" has remained largely unadulterated since mediaeval astrology was in vogue. For example, although Montesquieu "may modernise the terms but since he fails to analyse the idea of 'influence', he is caught within the wheels of time, and they hold him".⁴ Febvre carries the argument almost to modern times. To his eyes Semple's determinism is seen, in historical perspective, as "Bodin, revised, corrected and considerably enlarged; ... but never anything but Bodin".⁵

It is when the particular period is related to general or abridged history that the hydra of the present is most likely to appear and intervene. Febvre's association of Bodin with Montesquieu and Semple can be a dangerous process if each is taken out of its own context. Febvre seems to have avoided the trap when he recognises the modifications which have taken place in the concept of "influences". So that, contradictory as it may seem, Febvre's general method of analysing the observations of a past writer has enabled him to achieve considerable perspective and understanding of contemporaneous problems. In view of this, this present writer is tempted to reply to Bunge's inelegant rhetorical query as to

⁴ ibid., p. 7. Emphasis added.

⁵ ibid., p. 113.

why many geographers seem to be "stuck" over the problem of the "uniqueness" of place, region, or area.⁶ As Febvre points out in his examination of Montesquieu it is because the idea itself has seldom been analysed. "Uniqueness" is as much a mediaeval concept as "influence". The two were in fact related as the discussion of Giraldus has shown, and as the works of many present geographers still show. There is little difference between Cambrensis' "totality", Gernon's microcosm-macrocosm, and the French geographer concerned with the "personality" of an area. They are all searching for that same completeness, the same uniqueness. Similarly, this study seems to enlarge upon Hartshorne's assessment of the relation between history and geography in the period before Kant.⁷ The logical association between the two disciplines is both explicitly and implicitly apparent in the literature. The status of geography was therefore clearly determined by more than mere "popular interest and general utility"⁸ in this early period. Though, of course, it remained (as a reasoned concomitant) "the handmaid of history".⁹ Nevertheless, the heritage which geographers have found in chorography is understandable. Its utilitarian benefits are obvious. Thus Sauer was able to describe the Elizabethan period as an Age of

⁶W. Bunge, "Locations are not unique", A.A.A.G., Vol. 56, No. 2, June, 1966, p. 375.

⁷R. Hartshorne, "Geography as a Science of Space", A.A.A.G., Vol. 48, 1958, pp. 97-108.

⁸ibid., p. 99.

⁹loc. cit.

Surveys,¹⁰ i.e. the mediaeval ideas so prevalent at that time are disregarded in favour of the practical relevance which chorography and mapping had to seventeenth and eighteenth century geography.

But, at the same time, this conclusion also leads to an understanding that some balance must be found between contemporary prejudices and the stubborn fact of the past.

"A balance has to be struck, and a balance sheet prepared - without there being any occasion to substitute one fetish for another, to burn impetuously today what was worshipped yesterday ... Only, the fact ought not be believed a priori, nor schematically deduced from principles admitted without any discussion."¹¹

Above all else the fact of the past must be studied for itself; then afterwards, hindsight can seek what links it wishes. The history of geography is not in need of an invested (a priori) "geographical" context.

¹⁰C. Sauer, "Morphology of Landscape", reprinted in Land and Life, Berkeley, 1963, p. 319.

¹¹L. Febvre, op. cit., p. 367.

APPENDIX E

CHAPTER II - References to Giraldus Cambrensis not cited in
main body of text are as follows:-

"the various ... erroneous", The Historical Works of Giraldus Cambrensis:
"The Topography of Ireland", ed. T. Wright, London, 1913, p. 22.

"Nor ... faith", loc. cit.

"Any ... affirms", loc. cit.

"Still ... ourselves", loc. cit.

"the remoteness ... treat", loc. cit.

"the nine ... late", Chapter VI, loc. cit.

"The island ... flood", loc. cit.

"There ... age", ibid., p. 23.

"the fishes ... reptiles", "distinct ... origin", ibid., p. 7.

"treats ... creatures", loc. cit.

"The Spanish Sea", ibid., Chapter II, p. 17.

"Thus separated ... treasures", ibid., p. 18.

"Ireland ... air", ibid., p. 19.

"a comparison ... preferred", ibid., p. 7.

"For the ... fruitful", ibid., p. 19.

"Here ... hills", ibid., p. 20.

"These ... harvest", ibid., p. 25.

"The crops ... ear", ibid., p. 20.

"the crops ... rain", ibid., pp. 20-21.

CHAPTER IV - The following references to Fynes Moryson are not cited in the main body of the thesis. Spelling is modified to modern usage in order to clarify meaning.

"in ... presage", An Itinerary Containing His Ten Yeeres Travell ... etc., Glasgow, 1907, Vol. IV, Chapter 5, p. 191.

"Plutarch ... Scotia", ibid., p. 185.

"This ... Pale", ibid., pp. 185-186.

"The Ganyari ... uninhabited", ibid., p. 186.

"not ... St Mary Wic", loc. cit.

"esteemed ... Dublin", ibid., p. 187.

"not great", ibid., p. 188.

"lying ... sea", ibid., p. 190.

"consisting ... street", ibid., p. 186.

"the seat ... bishop", ibid., p. 187.

"the chief ... land", ibid., p. 188.

"the metropolitan ... island", ibid., p. 190.

"the haven ... sand", ibid., p. 188.

"Shannon ... Ireland", ibid., p. 189.

"Ulster ... cattle", ibid., p. 190.

"the land ... Ireland", ibid., p. 191.

"the air ... witnesseth", loc. cit.

"observes" i.e. "observed", ibid., p. 192.

"Also ... air", loc. cit.

"... they ... horses", ibid., p. 193.

"Ireland ... sea", ibid., p. 195.

"Hence ... fishermen", loc. cit.

"The Irish ... England", ibid., p. 196.

"They ... war", loc. cit.

"They ... sheep, ibid., p. 194.

"merchants ... export", loc. cit.

"They ... milk", ibid., pp. 200-201.

"They ... unsalted", ibid., p. 198.

"like ... turf", ibid., p. 202.

"The houses ... cattle", op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 498-499.

"The Irish ... it", ibid., p. 498.

CHAPTER VI - These references to Sir James Perrott are from
The Chronicle of Ireland 1584-1608. Those not
 cited in the body of the thesis are as follows:-

"more to ... preceptes", The Chronicle of Ireland 1584-1608, Dublin,
 1933, p. 10.

"effecte ... matter ...", ibid., p. 11.

"Few ... circumstances", ibid., p. 4.

"for the ... done", ibid., pp. 13-14.

"By ... assaylntes", ibid., p. 7.

"the constitution ... myndes", ibid., p. 14.

"accordinge ... exercise", loc. cit.

"faculties ... conversation", loc. cit.

"in both ... extremitie", loc. cit.

"Soe ... invention", ibid., p. 15.

"nations ... up", loc. cit.

"It ... manners", loc. cit.

